

FIG. 1

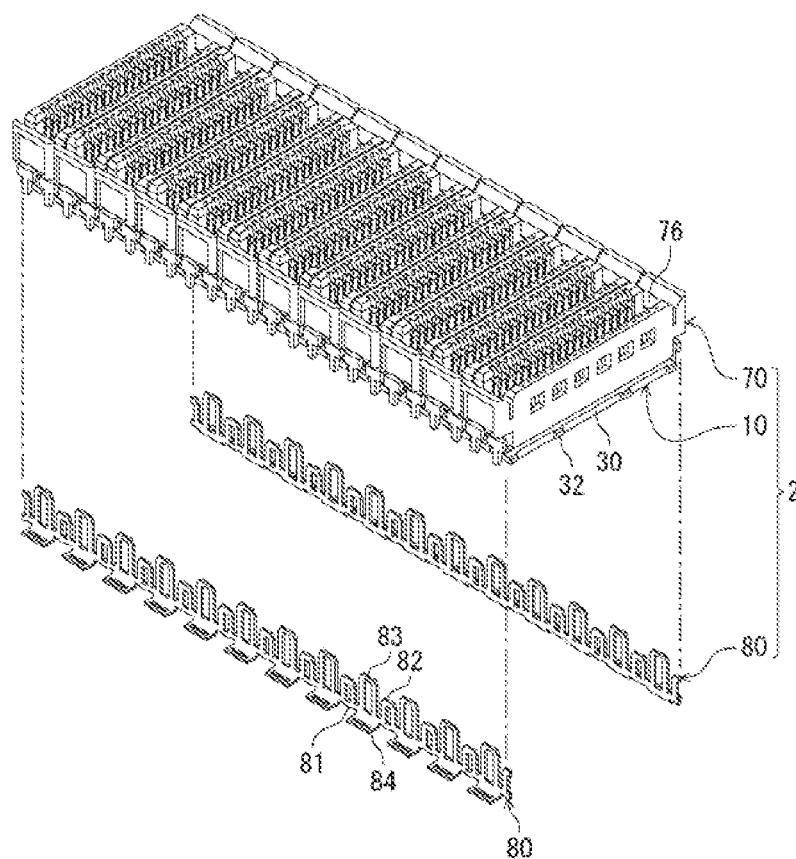


FIG. 2 (A)

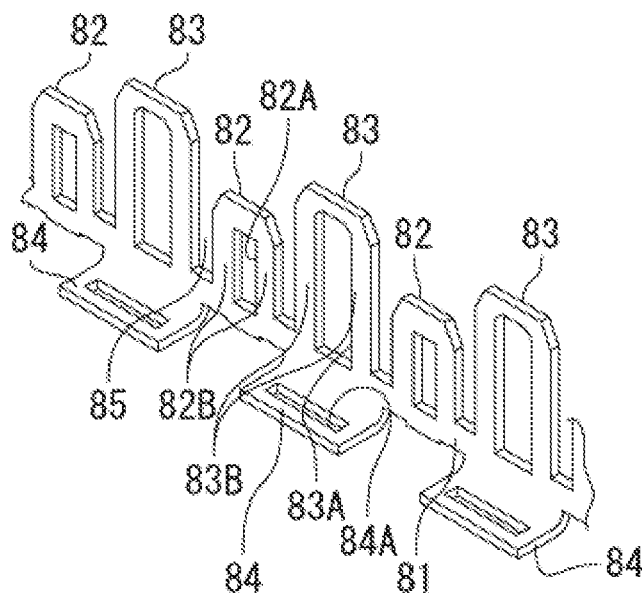


FIG. 2 (B)

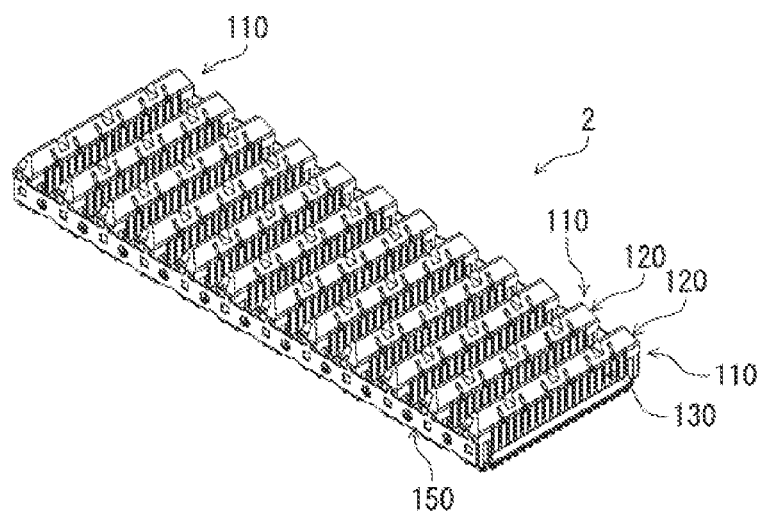


FIG. 3 (A)

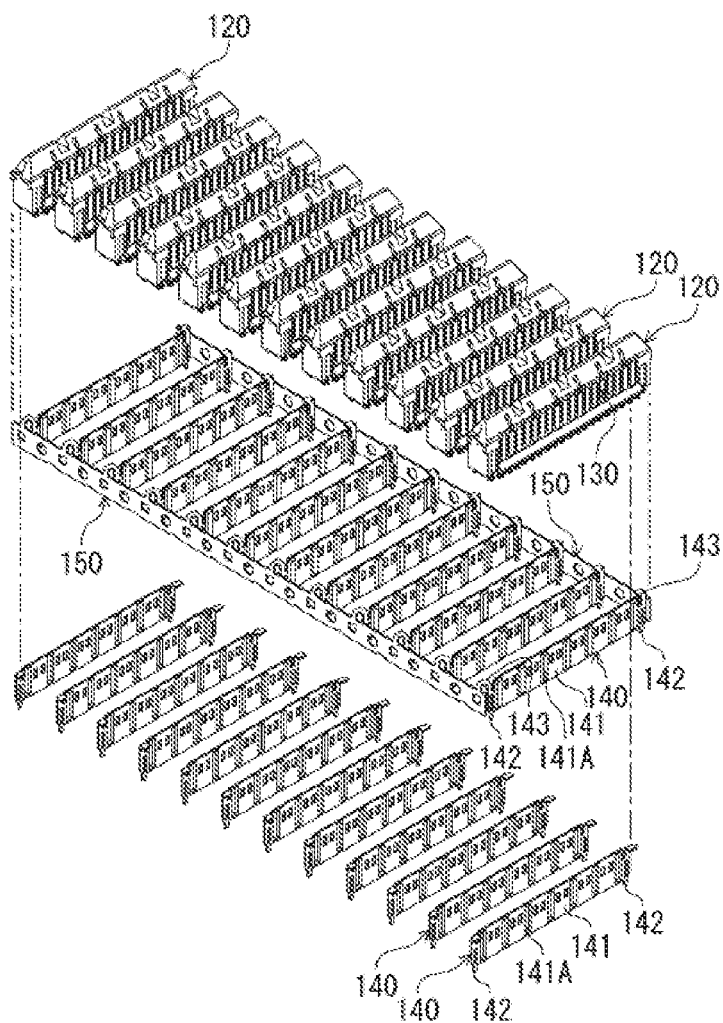


FIG. 3 (B)

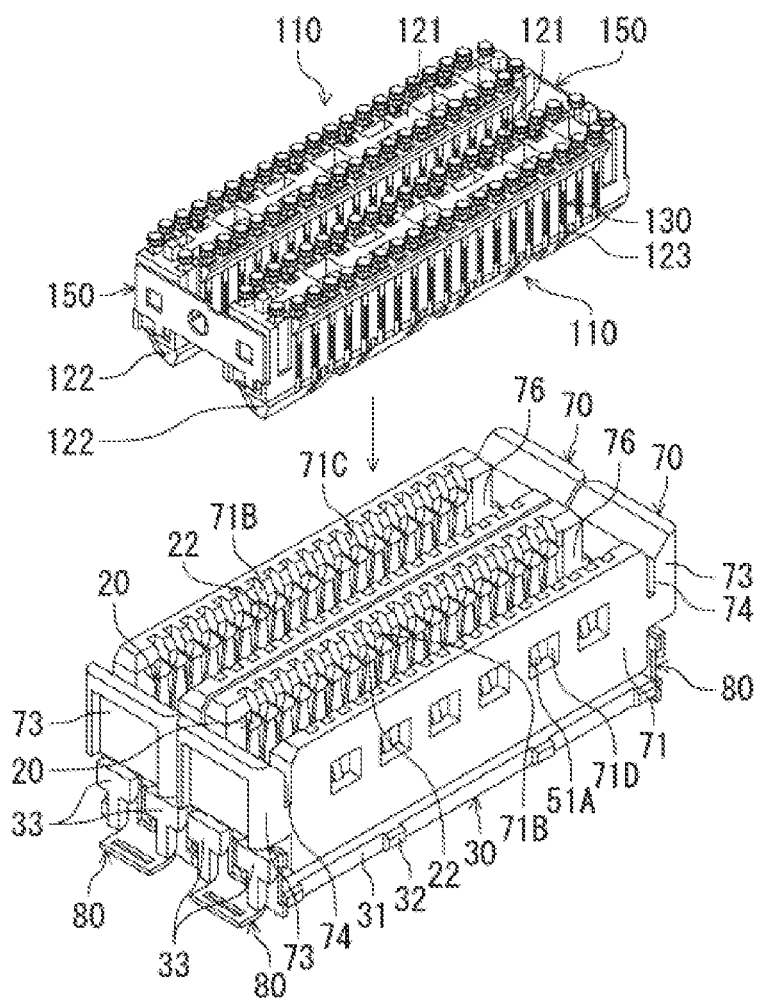


FIG. 4 (A)

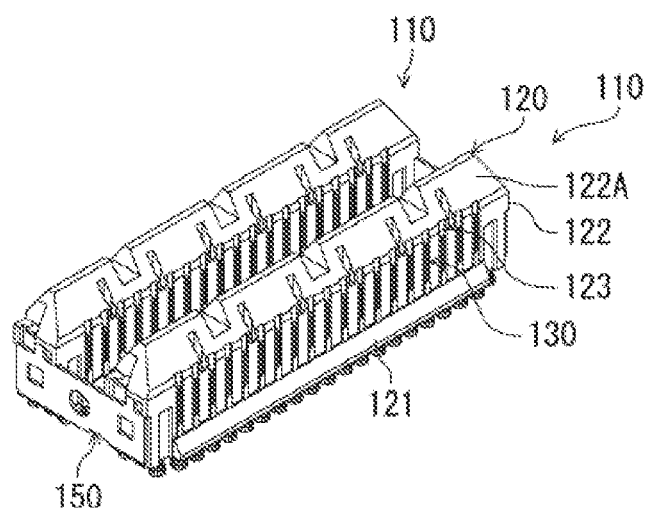


FIG. 4 (B)

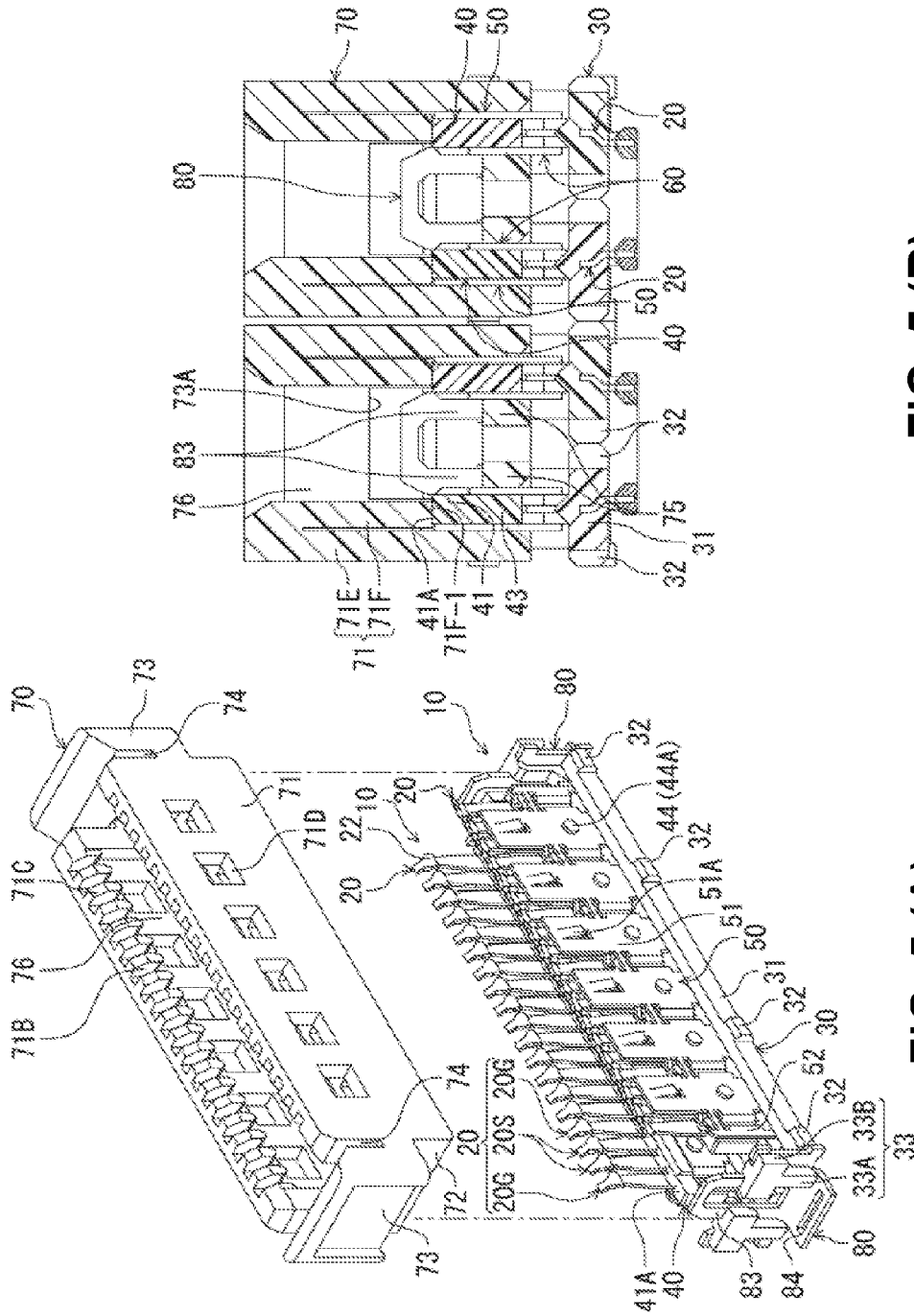


FIG. 5 (B)

FIG. 5 (A)

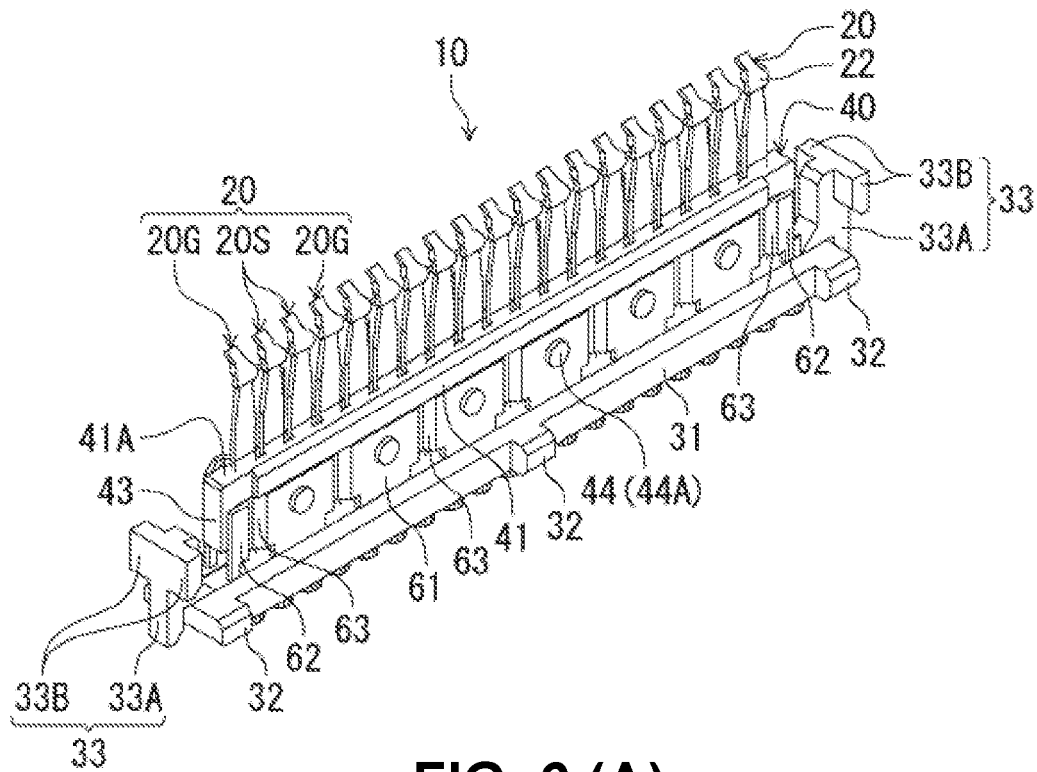


FIG. 6 (A)

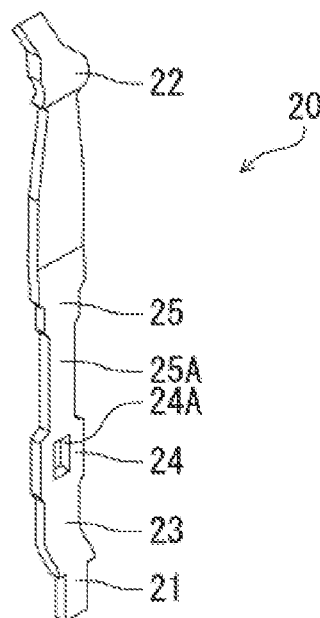


FIG. 6 (B)

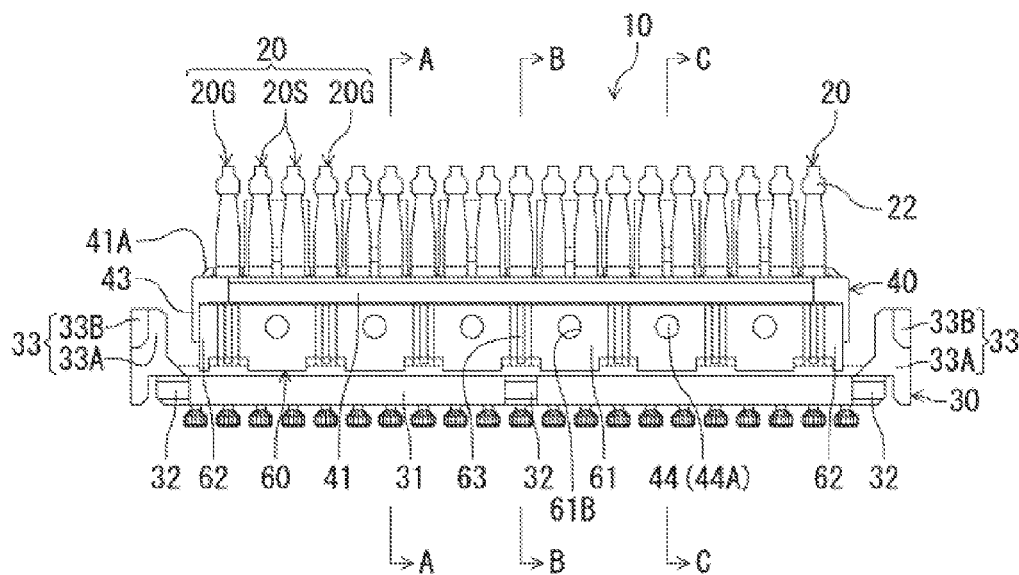


FIG. 7 (A)

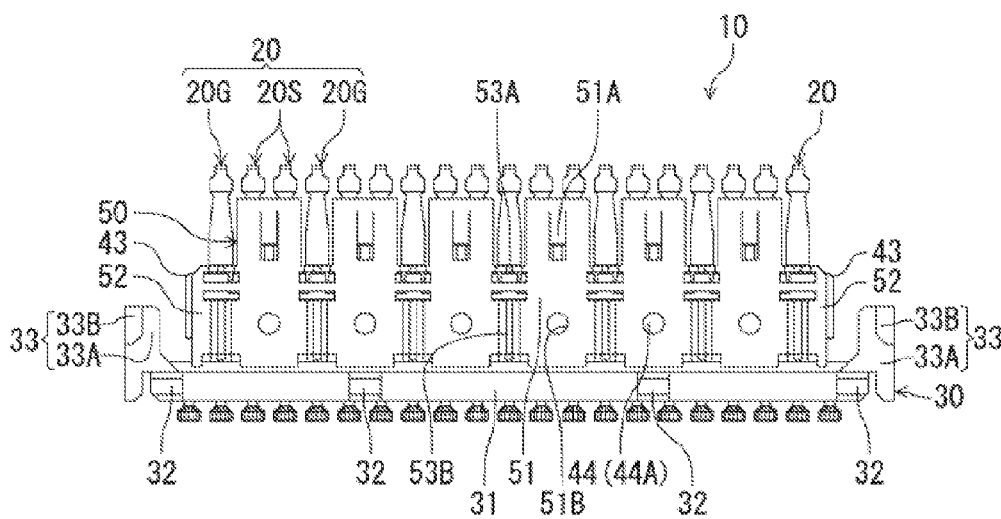


FIG. 7 (B)

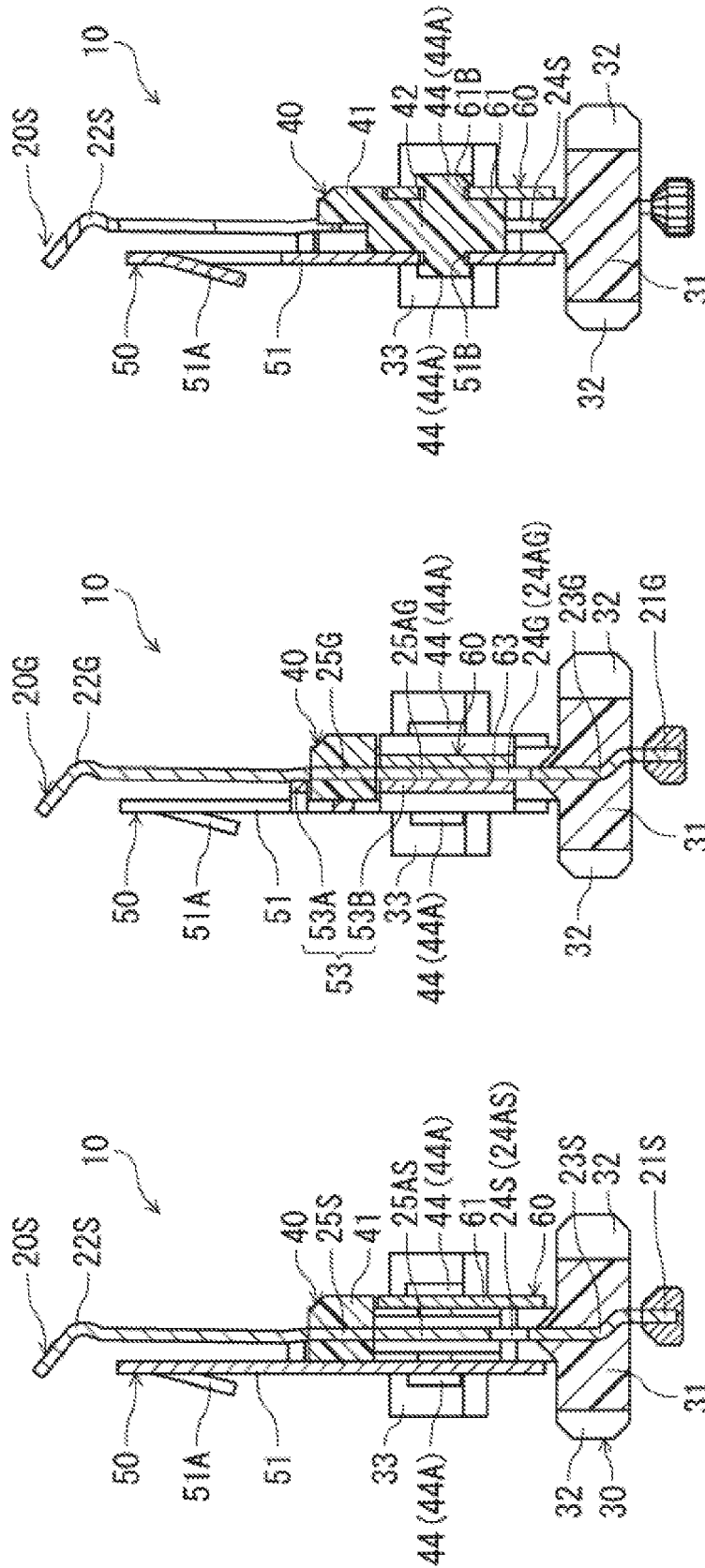


FIG. 8 (A)

FIG. 8 (B)

FIG. 8 (C)

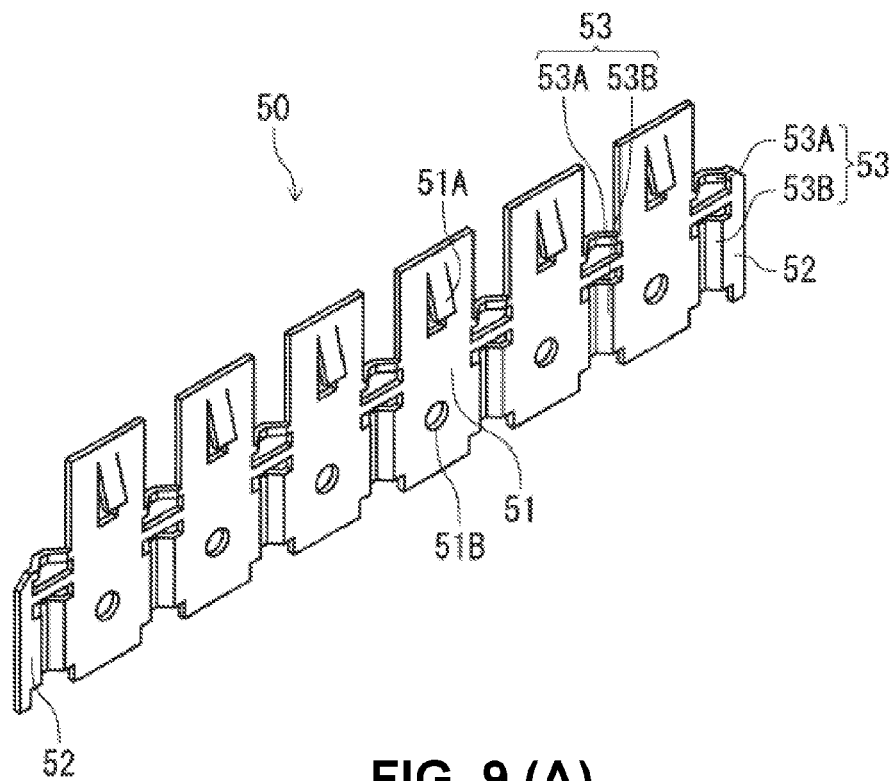


FIG. 9 (A)

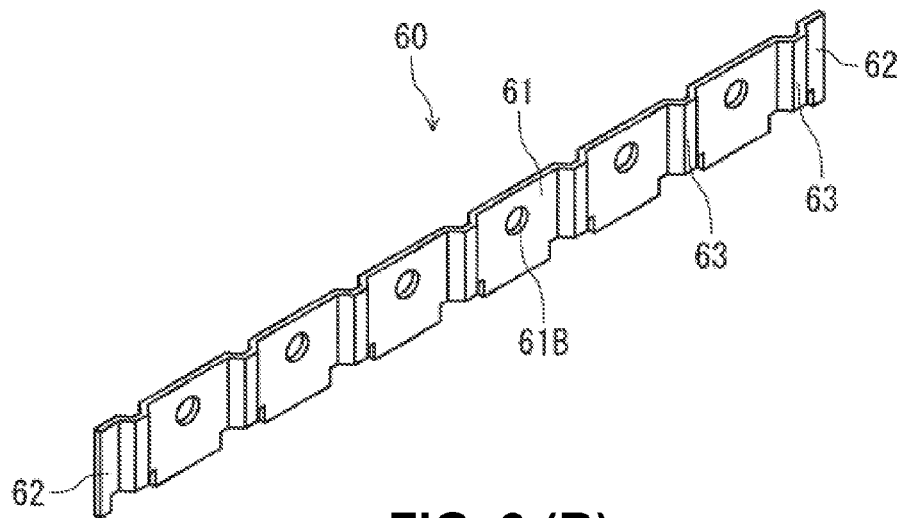


FIG. 9 (B)

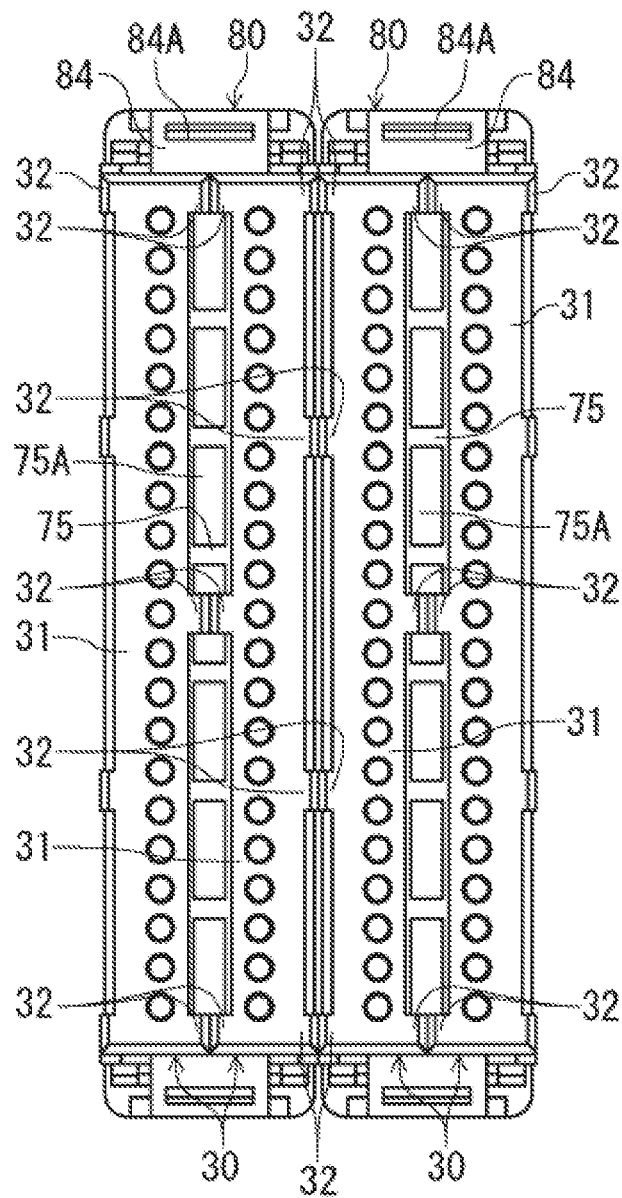


FIG. 10

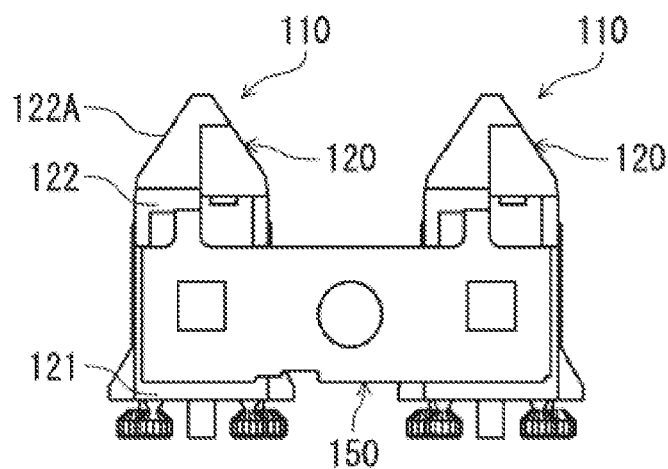


FIG. 11 (A)

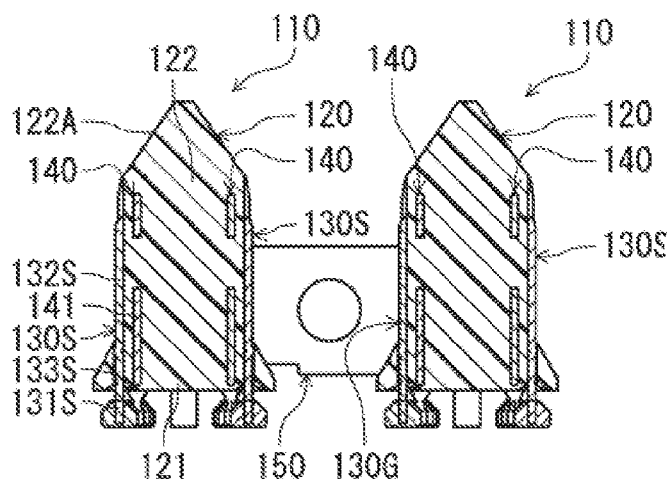


FIG. 11 (B)

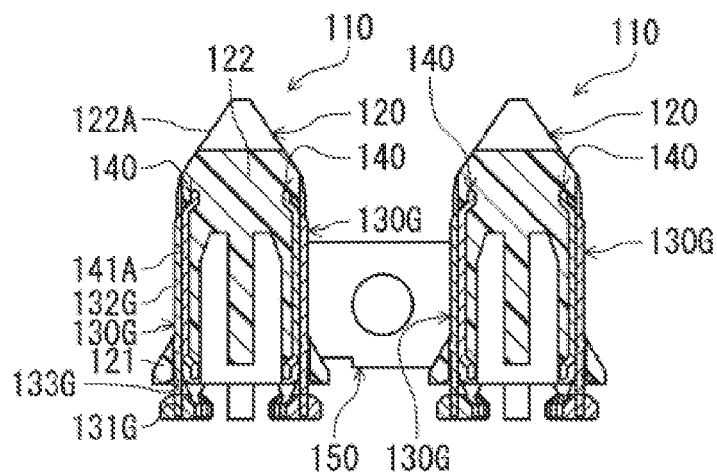


FIG. 11 (C)

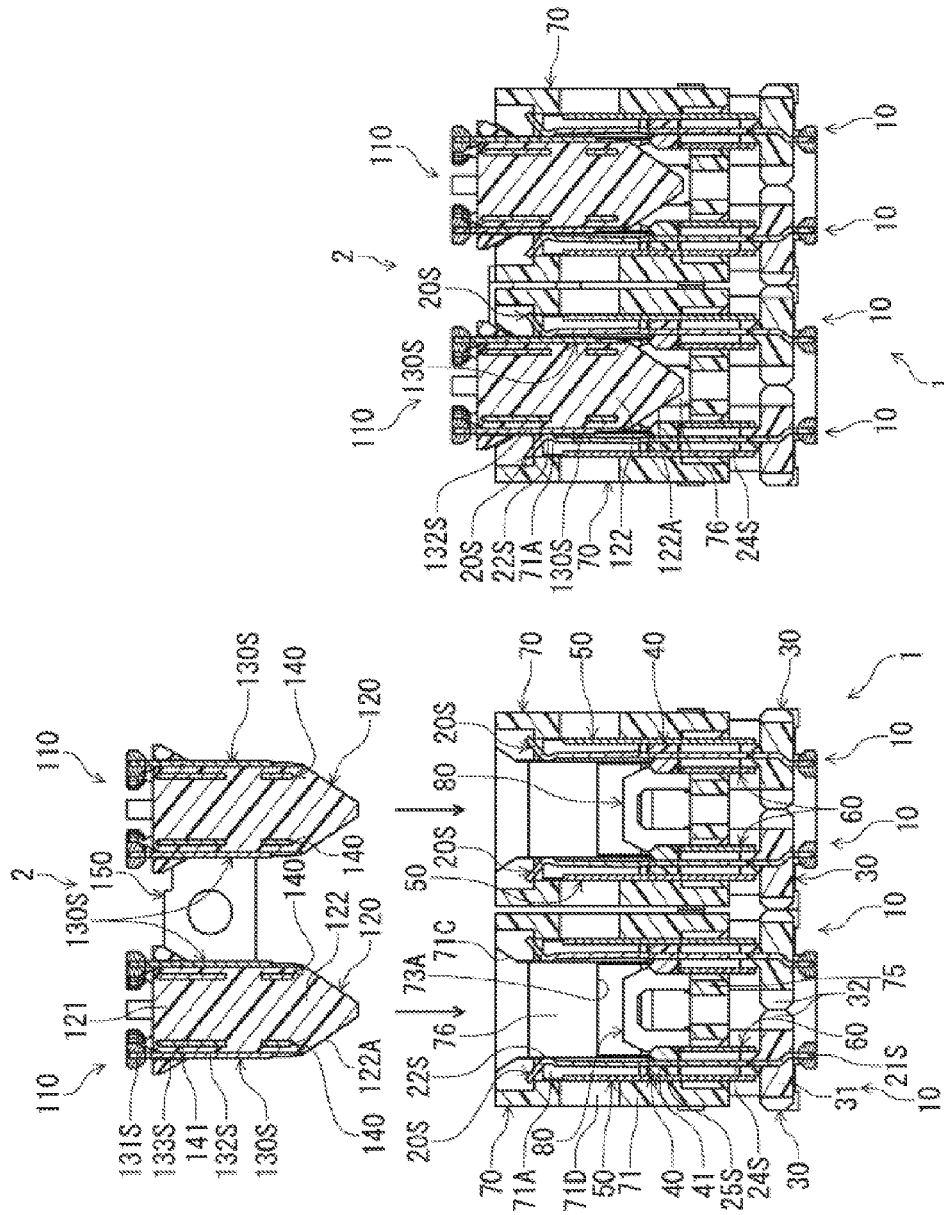


FIG. 12 (B)

FIG. 12 (A)

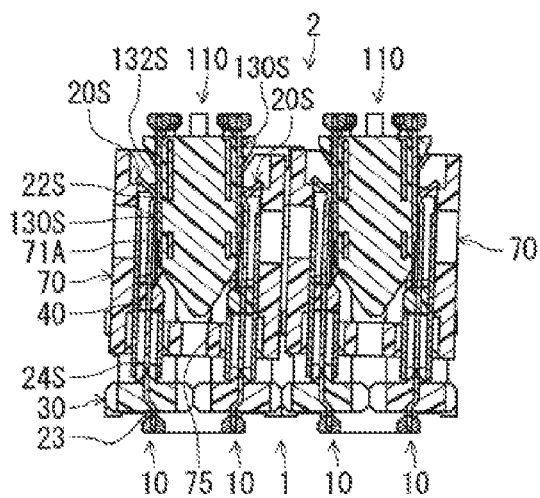


FIG. 13 (A)

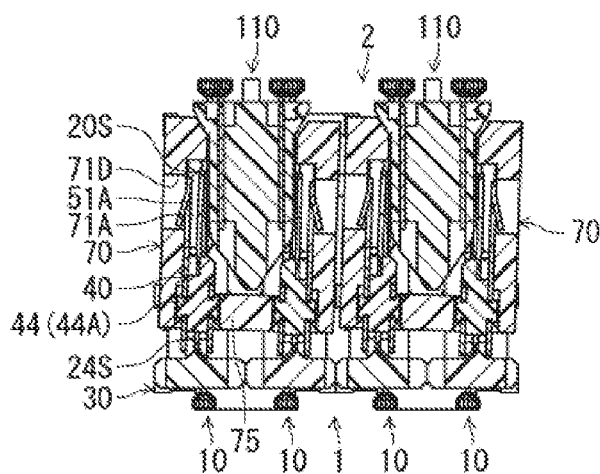


FIG. 13 (B)

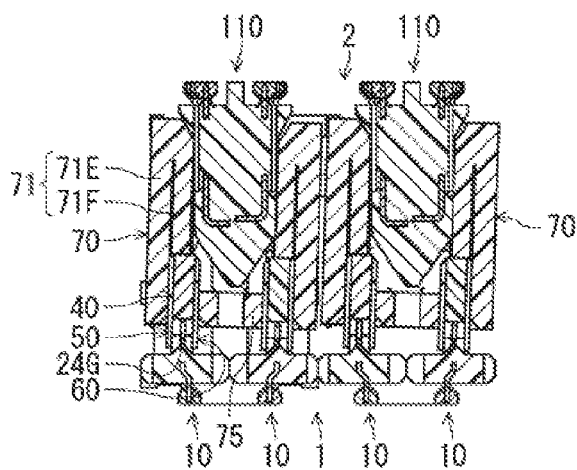


FIG. 13 (C)

ELECTRICAL CONNECTOR**BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION AND
RELATED ART STATEMENT**

The present invention relates to an electrical connector for a circuit board, which is to be disposed on a mounting surface of a circuit board.

In a conventional electrical connector for a circuit board (hereinafter also simply referred to as a connector), so-called a floating configuration may be employed. With the floating configuration, even when the conventional electrical connector is displaced from a normal fitting position for fitting to a mating connector in a direction parallel to the mounting surface of the circuit board, terminals of the conventional electrical connector are able to deform in the displacement direction to absorb the displacement. Therefore, it is achievable to fit and connect the conventional electrical connector to the mating connector.

For example, Patent Reference has disclosed a conventional connector that can float in one direction (lateral direction) that is horizontal to the mounting surface. The conventional connector is fitted to connect to a mating connector thereof, having an up-and-down direction as a fitting direction thereof that is perpendicular to the mounting surface of the circuit board.

Patent Reference: Japanese Patent Application Publication No. 2010-003651

The conventional connector disclosed in Patent Reference includes a plurality of terminals, stationary members, and inserting members. The plurality of terminals is made from a metal strip piece by bending the metal strip piece in a sheet thickness direction thereof. The plurality of terminals is arranged in two rows and is held all together with the stationary members and the inserting members, which are respectively disposed at two positions in the longitudinal direction of the terminals.

In the conventional connector disclosed in Patent Reference, each of the terminals is made simply by bending the sheet metal piece into an L-shape in the sheet thickness direction at one end thereof in the longitudinal direction. Each of the terminals has a connecting portion (a portion extending in a lateral direction) at one end thereof and a contact portion (a portion extending in a longitudinal direction) at the other end thereof. The connecting portions are connected to a circuit portion of the mounting surface. The contact portions contact with mating terminals, which are provided in the mating connector, at their sheet surfaces.

In the conventional connector disclosed in Patent Reference, the stationary members do not displace relative to the circuit board and hold all the terminals arranged in the two rows together at positions close to the connecting portions. The inserting members are parts to be inserted in receiving concave portions provided in the mating connector. The inserting members are provided being away from the stationary members in the fitting direction. The inserting members can displace linearly in the lateral direction relative to the stationary members. The inserting members hold all the terminals arranged in two rows with the terminal attachment portions provided in the middle parts in the connector fitting direction. The inserting portions hold the terminals at positions near the contact portions between the parts held by the stationary members and the contact portions.

In the conventional connector disclosed in Patent Reference, each of the terminals has a deformable portion, which can elastically deform in a sheet thickness direction thereof. The deformable portions are parts to be exposed between the

parts held by the terminal attachment portions of the inserting members and parts held by the stationary members. In other words, the deformable portions are parts that are held by neither the inserting members nor the stationary members. By the elastic deformation of the deformable portions, the inserting members as well as the contact portions of the terminals displace linearly in the lateral direction relative to the stationary members.

According to the conventional connector disclosed in Patent Reference, when there is misalignment in the lateral direction between the connector and the mating connector, in the connector fitting step, the contact portions of the terminals of the connector receive a pressing force in the receiving concave portions of the mating connector. The pressing force works in the lateral direction from the mating terminals so as to push towards the regular fitting positions. The strength of the pressing force to receive depends on the amount of the displacement. As a result, the deformable portions of the terminals in the two rows, which are all held together by the inserting members, elastically deform in the sheet thickness direction according to the displacement.

At this point, according to the conventional connector disclosed in Patent Reference, the two terminals are held together at two positions by the stationary member and the inserting member in the longitudinal direction of the terminals. Therefore, the inserting members displace linearly in the lateral direction with the contact portions of the terminals in two rows, without tilting to the longitudinal direction. The linear displacement of the inserting members brings the inserting members to the positions, so as to be able to fit the connector to the mating connector. As a result, the connector can fit to the mating connector.

In case of the conventional connector having the floating configuration, when it is achievable to secure large floating (the amount of possible displacement corresponding to the amount of the misalignment) between the connectors, it is achievable to absorb the influence of the misalignment between the connectors, which is preferred. In case of the conventional connector disclosed in Patent Reference, in order to obtain floating with large displacement, the lengths of the terminals may be increased in the fitting direction so as to increase the elastic displacement of the deformable portions of the terminals in the sheet thickness direction. However, by increasing the lengths of the terminals, the size of connector is also increased, so that it is not preferred.

In addition, according to another configuration disclosed in Patent Reference, each of the terminals has a deformable portion in the middle part thereof in the longitudinal direction. The deformable portion is bent to have a 90-degree rotated S-shape. The deformable portion can elastically deform in the sheet thickness direction of the terminal. With such deformable portions having the 90-degree rotated S-shapes, it is achievable to secure large floating by increasing the total length of each of the terminals but without increasing the height dimension of the terminals. As a result, it is not necessary to increase the height dimension of the connector.

When such deformable portions are provided, however, although it is achievable to avoid an increase in the height dimension of the connector, the size is increased in the lateral direction (a direction horizontal to the circuit board) for the amount of bending made in the deformable portions to have the 90-degree rotated S-shapes. Such an increase in the size of the connector in the lateral direction reduces an area of a space for mounting other electronic devices on the mounting surface of the circuit board. As a result, there is less flexibility in the design, and it is not preferred.

3

Moreover, the terminals are bent to the 90-degree rotated S-shapes, and thereby the terminals have complicated shapes. The complicated shapes of the terminals increase the cost and labor upon manufacturing of the terminals. In addition, since the signal transmission path is curved, for example, when signals to be transmitted between the connectors are high-speed signals, there is concern of adverse impact on the signal transmission speed.

In view of the above problems, an object of the invention is to provide an electrical connector for a circuit board, whereby it is achievable to secure large floating of the terminals without complicating the shapes of the terminals.

Further objects and advantages of the present invention will be apparent from the following description of the present invention.

SUMMARY OF THE PRESENT INVENTION

An electrical connector for a circuit board of the invention is to be disposed on a mounting surface of a circuit board.

According to a first aspect of the invention, the electrical connector for a circuit board includes a plurality of connecting members, and casing members. The plurality of connecting members is arranged, having one direction parallel to a mounting surface of the circuit board as an arrangement direction. Each of the casing members is attached to the connecting member so as to accommodate at least one connecting member. Each of the connecting members includes terminals, which are to be connected to the mating connector, and a stationary holding member. Each of the terminals in each of the connecting members has a connecting portion at one end in a longitudinal direction, a contact portion at the other end in the longitudinal direction, and a held portion near the contact portion in the longitudinal direction. The connecting portions connect to a circuit portion of the mounting surface of the circuit. The contact portions contact with mating terminals provided in a mating connector. The held portion is to be held by the stationary holding member. The casing members can make at least one of the displacements, straight displacement and/or angular displacement. The straight displacement is relative linear displacement of each of the casing members in the arrangement direction of the connecting members. The angular displacement is relative angular displacement around a rotational axis, which is a connector's width direction that is perpendicular to the arrangement direction of the connecting members. In addition, each of the casing members includes guiding surfaces. Each of the guiding surfaces guides the mating terminals to positions in the arrangement of the connecting members, so as to be able to contact with the contact portions of the terminals. Each of the terminals has a deformable portion at a part opposite the connecting portion relative to the held portion in the longitudinal direction of the terminal. The deformable portions can more easily deform in the arrangement direction than other portions of the terminals. When the casing members guide the mating connector with the guiding surfaces, with the straight displacement and the angular displacement of the casing members, the deformable portions of the terminals deform in the arrangement direction.

According to the first aspect of the invention, in the electrical connector for a circuit board, there is a plurality of connecting members arranged. Therefore, the terminals provided in each of the connecting members (the terminals arranged in the arrangement direction of the connecting members) are not held all together by one holding member (e.g., the above-described inserting member) at positions

4

near the contact portions. The terminals in the respective connecting members can displace independently from terminals in other connecting members.

According to the first aspect of the invention, prior to fitting the connectors, when the connector for a circuit board and the mating connector are not aligned relative to each other in the arrangement direction of the connecting members, if the mating connector abuts the casing members in the connector fitting direction in the connector fitting process, the casing members make at least one of displacements, straight displacement or angular displacement towards the side of positional displacement, for the amount of the displacement. Therefore, as the casing members displace, the deformable portions of the terminals deform in the sheet thickness direction of the terminals. As a result, the casing members and the connecting members float according to the misalignment between the connectors. Consequently, the guiding surfaces guide the mating terminals to the positions so as to be able to contact with the contact portions. As a result, it is achievable to secure satisfactory fitting/connecting state of the connectors.

As described above, according to the first aspect of the invention, the terminals respectively provided in the plurality of connecting members are not held all together at positions near the contact positions of the terminals. Therefore, upon floating, the deformable portions of the terminals in the respective connecting members deform to bend towards the side where misalignment with the mating connector occurs. More specifically, areas from the deformable portions of the terminals to the other ends (ends where the contact portions are provided) displace to tilt having the deformable portions as fulcrums. Therefore, according to the first aspect of the invention, the amount of displacements of the contact portions of the terminals are greater in the direction of the misalignment, in comparison with a case of straight displacement in the misalignment direction without tilting of the contact portions of the terminal as in the conventional connector. In other words, according to the first aspect of the invention, without increasing the total lengths of the terminals, which are in turn the connector's size, and without making the shapes of the terminals complicated, it is achievable to obtain large floating. In addition, it is also achievable to manage large misalignment between the connectors.

Moreover, according to the first aspect of the invention, not being limited in the connector fitting process, after fitting the connectors at the normal fitting positions, even when the connector receive unexpected external force and the connectors are misaligned from each other in the arrangement direction, it is achievable to manage the misalignment by the floating.

According to a second aspect of the invention, each of the connecting members further includes a movable holding member to hold the terminals in the middle part between the contact portions and the deformable portions in the longitudinal direction of the terminals. Each of the movable holding members includes a pressure-receiving portion to receive pressing force when the casing member makes straight displacement or angular displacement. With the pressing force being received by the pressure-receiving portions, the angular displacement is made relative to the stationary holding members, having the connector's width direction as a rotational axis.

With such movable holding members, upon floating, when the movable holding members receive the pressing force at the pressure-receiving portions from the casing members, which are displaced straight or angularly, the

5

movable holding members make angular displacement as described above. In addition, the terminals displace so as to tilt having the deformable portions as fulcrums. The movable holding portions are provided in the middle parts between the contact portions and deformable portions of the terminals. In other words, the deformable portions are provided between the stationary holding members and the movable holding members. The terminals will not flex at the parts (the held portions) that are held by the stationary holding members and the parts that are held by the movable holding members. Therefore, it is achievable to bend to deform the deformable portions by securely focusing the stress onto the deformable portions upon floating of the connector.

According to a third aspect of the invention, the terminals are made from metal strips and are deformable in their sheet thickness direction. The deformable portions of the terminals have greater width than those of the parts held by the movable holding members. Each of the deformable portions may have a concave portion that is concaved from the sheet surface of the terminal or a hole penetrating the terminal in the sheet thickness direction within the range of the width.

In transmission of electrical signals by a connector, normally, impedance change is preferred to be small over the range in the longitudinal direction of the terminals so as to minimize loss of the electrical signals. According to the third aspect of the invention, the deformable portions have to deform in their thickness direction upon floating. For this reason, the deformable portions are not held by other members and exposed to the air. Therefore, in order to match impedance with that at parts held by the movable holding members, i.e., parts where at least a part of circumferential surface is covered by the movable holding members, it is necessary to increase the width of the deformable portions to be greater than the width of the parts held by the movable holding members.

According to the third aspect of the invention, the concave portions or the holes are formed within the width ranges, so as to have the widths of the deformable portions be greater than the widths of the parts held by the movable members. Consequently, while matching impedance, it is achievable to easily deform the deformable portions in the sheet thickness direction while keeping the size of the widths. As a result, even when impedance has to be strictly matched, especially in case of transmission of high-speed signals, it is possible to use the connector of the invention.

According to a fourth aspect of the invention, it is not essential to form the concave portions or the holes in the deformable portions of the terminals. When it is not necessary to strictly match impedance, for example, the terminals may be made from metal strips and are deformable in the sheet thickness direction. The deformable portions of the terminals may be formed narrower than other parts adjacent to the deformable portions in the longitudinal direction of the terminals.

According to the invention, a plurality of connecting members having terminals therein is arranged and the terminals in each of the connecting members can displace independently from terminals in other connecting members.

Therefore, even when there is misalignment between connectors in the arrangement direction of the connecting members in a connector fitting process or in a connector fitted state, the connectors can float by tilting displacement of the terminals with the deformable portions being fulcrums. As a result, without increasing the total length of each of the terminals and in turn the size of the connector, and without making the shapes of the terminals complicated, it

6

is achievable to obtain large floating and to manage large misalignment between the connectors.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a perspective view showing an electrical connector assembled component according to a first embodiment of the invention, which shows a state before fitting connectors;

FIGS. 2(A) and 2(B) are perspective views showing a receptacle connector of FIG. 1, wherein FIG. 2(A) shows a state that receptacle-side joining members that are separated from the receptacle connector of FIG. 1, and FIG. 2(B) shows a partial enlarged view of the receptacle-side joining member of FIG. 2(A);

FIGS. 3(A) and 3(B) are perspective views showing a plug connector of FIG. 1, wherein FIG. 3(A) shows the plug connector of FIG. 1 that is flipped upside down, and FIG. 3(B) shows grounding plates and plug-side joining members that are separated from the plug connector of FIG. 3(A);

FIGS. 4(A) and 4(B) are perspective views showing a part of the receptacle connector of FIG. 1 and a part of the plug connector that corresponds to the part of the receptacle connector, wherein FIG. 4(A) shows a state before fitting the connectors, and FIG. 4(B) shows state the plug connector of 4(A) is flipped upside down;

FIGS. 5(A) and 5(B) are views showing a part of the receptacle connector of FIG. 1, wherein FIG. 5(A) shows a perspective view of a part of the receptacle connector, from which a casing member is separated, and FIG. 5(B) shows a sectional views of the receptacle connector taken at a surface perpendicular to a width direction of the receptacle connector, which is near the ends of the casing members in the connector's width direction;

FIGS. 6(A) and 6(B) are perspective views showing receptacle terminals, wherein FIG. 6(A) shows the receptacle terminals held in a receptacle-side connecting member and FIG. 6(B) shows the receptacle terminal to be held in the receptacle-side connecting member;

FIGS. 7(A) and 7(B) are views showing the receptacle-side connecting member of FIG. 6(A), wherein FIG. 7(A) shows a front view of the receptacle-side connecting member viewed from the side of a short grounding plate, and FIG. 7(B) shows a back view of the receptacle-side connecting member viewed from the side of a long grounding plate;

FIGS. 8(A) through 8(C) are sectional views showing the receptacle-side connecting member of FIG. 7(A), wherein FIG. 8(A) shows the sectional view taken at a line A-A of FIG. 7(A), FIG. 8(B) shows the sectional view taken at a line B-B of FIG. 7(A), and FIG. 8(C) shows the sectional view taken at a line C-C of FIG. 7(A);

FIGS. 9(A) and 9(B) are perspective views showing the grounding plates that are to be held by the receptacle-side connecting member, wherein FIG. 9(A) shows a long grounding plate and FIG. 9(B) shows a short grounding plate;

FIG. 10 is a bottom view of the receptacle connector of FIG. 4(A);

FIGS. 11(A) through 11(C) are views showing the plug connector of FIG. 4(B), wherein FIG. 11(A) shows a side view of the plug connector viewed in a connector's width direction, FIG. 11(B) shows a sectional view of the plug connector at a position of signal terminals, which is taken at a surface perpendicular to the connector's width direction of the plug connector of FIG. 4(B), and FIG. 11(C) shows a sectional view of the plug connector at a position of ground-

7

ing terminals, which is taken at a surface perpendicular to the connector's width direction of the plug connector of FIG. 4(B);

FIGS. 12(A) and 12(B) are sectional views showing the electrical connector assembled component of FIG. 4(A), wherein FIG. 12(A) shows a state before fitting the connectors and FIG. 12(B) shows a state after fitting the connectors; and

FIGS. 13(A) through 13(C) are sectional views showing the electrical connector assembled component in a floating state, wherein FIG. 13(A) shows the sectional view taken at a position of the signal terminals, FIG. 13(B) shows the sectional view at a position between signal terminals, and FIG. 13(C) shows the sectional view at a position near ends of the casing members and

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

Hereunder, an embodiment of the present invention will be described with reference to the accompanying drawings.

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of an electrical connector assembled component according to an embodiment of the invention, which shows a state before fitting connectors; According to the embodiment, the connector assembled component includes a receptacle connector 1 and a plug connector 2, which are fit to connect each other. The receptacle connector 1 and the plug connector 2 are electrical connectors for circuit boards, which are to be disposed on mounting surfaces of different circuit boards. The receptacle connector 1 and the plug connector 2 are fit to connect each other, having a direction perpendicular to the mounting surfaces of the respective circuit boards (an up-and-down direction in FIG. 1) as an insertion/removal direction thereof.

In the description of this embodiment below, a "connector fitting direction" is set as a direction of fitting the plug connector 2 to the receptacle connector 1, i.e., a direction of moving the plug connector 2 downward in FIG. 1, and a "connector removal direction" is set as a direction opposite thereto, i.e., an upward direction in FIG. 1.

The circuit boards to mount the receptacle connector 1 and the plug connector 2 are respectively composed so as to have a circuit portion made of metal be disposed on a surface or inside of a sheet member made of resin. As a material of such sheet member, for example, a common material such as so-called FR4, which is glass fiber fabric impregnated with epoxy resin, may be used. As a material of the circuit portion, for example, general copper alloy such as phosphor bronze may be used.

[Configuration of the Receptacle Connector 1]

As shown in FIG. 1, the receptacle connector 1 of the embodiment has an outer shape of a rectangular parallelepiped, which extends in one direction parallel to a mounting surface of the circuit board (not illustrated) as a longitudinal direction. The receptacle connector 1 includes a plurality of receptacle-side connecting members 10, casing members 70, and two receptacle-side joining members 80 (see also FIG. 2). The plurality of receptacle-side connecting members 10 is arranged in the longitudinal direction of the receptacle connector. Each of the casing members 70 accommodates one set of two receptacle-side connecting members that are adjacent to each other. The two receptacle-side joining members 80 extend in the arrangement direction over the range the plurality of receptacle-side connecting members 10 are arranged. In addition, the two receptacle-side joining members 80 join and hold the plurality of receptacle-side

8

connecting members 10. The receptacle connector 1 receives fitting portions (fitting walls that will be described later (see FIGS. 4(A) and 4(B)) of plug-side connecting members 110 provided in the plug connector 2 at spaces (receiving portions 76 that will be described later) between the two receptacle-side connecting members 10 that are to be accommodated in the casing members 70.

As shown in FIG. 4(A), each of the receptacle-side connecting members 10 has a plurality of receptacle terminals 20, two terminal holding members (a stationary holding member 30 and a movable holding member 40, which will be described later), and two grounding plates (a long grounding plate 50 and a short grounding plate 60, which will be described later). The plurality of the receptacle terminals 20 is arranged in a connector's width direction, which is a lateral direction of the receptacle connector 1. The two terminal holding members arrange and hold the plurality of receptacle terminals 20 by being integrally molded therewith. The two grounding plates are disposed in the arrangement direction of the receptacle-side connecting members 10, so as to face each other having the receptacle terminals in between. According to the embodiment, the receptacle-side connecting members 10 that are adjacent to each other in the arrangement direction are disposed to be symmetrical to each other.

As is well shown in FIG. 6(B), each of the receptacle terminals 20 is made by partially bending a metal strip piece, which extends in an up-and-down direction, in a plate's thickness direction. Each of the receptacle terminals 20 has a connecting portion 21 at a lower end (one end) and a contact portion 22 at an upper end (the other end). The connecting portions 21 are to be connected to a circuit portion of a mounting surface of a circuit board by soldering. The contact portions 22 contact with plug terminals 130 provided on the plug connector 2. Moreover, each of the receptacle terminals 20 has at its lower half part a lower held portion 23, a deformable portion 24, and an upper held portion 25. The lower held portion 23 is adjacent to the connecting portion being right thereabove. The deformable portion 24 is adjacent to the lower held portion 23 being right thereabove. The upper held portion 25 is adjacent to the deformable portions 24 being right thereabove.

As shown in FIGS. 5(A), 6(A), 7(A), and 7(B), according to the embodiment, among the plurality of receptacle terminals 20 arranged and held by the respective receptacle-side connecting members 10, a part of the receptacle terminals 20 serve as signal terminals 20S and the rest of the receptacle terminals 20 serve as grounding terminals 20G. The signal terminals 20S and the grounding terminals 20G are arranged in a specified order. According to the embodiment, the grounding terminals 20G are arranged on both sides of a pair of signal terminals 20S that are adjacent each other. To the pair of signal terminals 20S, high-speed differential signals that are paired to each other are to be transmitted. Hereunder, when the receptacle terminals 20 need to be specifically described as the signal terminals 20S or the grounding terminals 20G, "S" will be affixed to reference numerals of each portion of the signal terminals 20S and "G" will be affixed to referential numerals of each portion of the grounding terminals 20G.

As shown in FIGS. 8(A) and 8(B), the contact portions 22 are formed to convexly curve in a sheet thickness direction of the receptacle terminals 20 and have elasticity in the sheet thickness direction. The contact portions 22 contact with the plug terminals 130 at their convexly curved sheet surface with certain contact pressure. The contact portions 22 are formed wider than contact portions 132 of the plug terminals

9

130 of the plug connector 2, which will be described later. The lower held portions 22 are parts to be held by the stationary holding members 30 as terminal holding members. Each of the lower held portions 23 is made by bending a lower portion thereof in the sheet thickness direction into a generally cranked shape. As shown in FIG. 6(B), the deformable portions 24 are formed to have width that is greater than those of the lower held portions 23 and the upper held portions 25, which will be described later. Each of the deformable portions 24 has a hole 24A penetrating in a center area in the width direction. With the hole 24A formed in this way, each of the deformable portions 24 can more easily deform in the sheet thickness direction than other areas in the receptacle terminal 20. The upper held portions 25 are parts to be held by a movable holding member 40, which serves as a terminal holding member and will be described later. As shown in FIG. 6(B), the lower half part of the upper held portion 25 is formed as a narrow portion 25 having smaller width than other areas in the receptacle terminal 20.

As described above, the connector assembled component of the embodiment is for transmitting high-speed signals. Therefore, it is strongly demanded to minimize impedance change, i.e., to achieve so-called "impedance matching", over the range of the receptacle terminals in the longitudinal direction. According to the embodiment, the lower held portions 23 are held by the stationary holding member 30, the upper held portions 25 are held by the movable holding member 40 by integral molding, and at least a part of their circumferential surfaces is covered. On the other hand, since the deformable portions 24 have to be deformable in the thickness direction, the deformable portions 24 are not held by the terminal holding members 30 or 40, and its whole circumferential surface is exposed to the air. Therefore, the deformable portions 24 tend to have greater impedance than those of the lower held portions 23 and the upper portions 25 to be held.

According to the embodiment, the deformable portions 24 have larger width than those of the lower held portions 23 and the upper portions 25 to be held so as to have smaller impedance. As a result, it is achievable to match the impedance of the deformable portions 24 with those of the lower held portions 23 and the upper held portions 25. Moreover, the deformable portions 24 have holes 24A within the range of the width thereof. Therefore, the deformable portions 24 can easily deform in their thickness direction, while keeping the deformable portions 24 wide to match the impedance. Accordingly, it is achievable to secure the both impedance matching and easy deformation of the deformable portions 24, so that the receptacle connector 1 of the embodiment can be used for transmission of high-speed signals.

According to the embodiment, with the holes 24A, the deformable portions 24 can easily deform. Alternatively, for example, the deformable portions 24 can have concave portions that are dented within the width range of the deformable portions 24 from the sheet surfaces of the deformable portions 24. In addition, when it is not necessary to strictly match the impedance, such as when frequencies of the signals to transmit are low, the deformable portions 24 may be formed to be narrower than those of adjacent areas so as to be easily deformable.

Moreover, according to the embodiment, any of the receptacle terminals 20 has the deformable portion 24. However, it is not essentially required for all the receptacle terminals 20 to have the deformable portion 24. For example, in the respective connecting members 10, only a part of the receptacle terminals 20 in a terminal row (a row

10

of the receptacle terminals 20 arranged in the width direction of the receptacle terminals 20) can have the deformable portions 24. In this case, the rest of the receptacle terminals 20 in the terminal row have the same shape as that of the above-described part of the receptacle terminals 20, but do not have the hole 24.

According to the embodiment, each of the receptacle-side connecting members 10 has the terminal rows, in each of which the plurality of receptacle terminals 20 is arranged. However, it is not essentially required for each of the receptacle-side connecting members 10 to have a plurality of terminals. Instead, only one receptacle terminal may be provided in each of the receptacle-side connecting members 10 so as to use the receptacle terminal, for example, as a power terminal.

As the terminal holding members, there are stationary holding members 30, and movable holding members 40. Each of the stationary holding members 30 holds the lower held portions 23 of all the receptacle terminals 20 provided in one receptacle-side connecting member 10 together by integral molding. Each of the movable holding members 40 hold the upper held portions 25 of all the receptacle terminals 20 in one receptacle-side connecting member 10 together by integral molding. Each of the movable holding members 40 can make angular displacement relative to the stationary holding member 30 in the receptacle-side connecting member 10, having the connector's width direction (terminals' width direction) as a rotational axis.

Each of the stationary holding members 30 is made of an electrically insulating material such as resin. As shown in FIGS. 5(A) and 6(A), each of the stationary holding members 30 extends in the connector's width direction, which is the arrangement direction of the receptacle terminals 20. Each of the stationary holding members 30 includes a holding portion 31, a plurality of protrusions 32, and held wall portions 33. The holding portion 31 holds the lower held portions 23 of the receptacle terminals 20. Each of the plurality of protrusions 32 has a shape of a rectangular parallelepiped. The protrusion 32 protrudes from the both side surfaces of the holding portions (flat surfaces perpendicular to the arrangement direction of the receptacle-side connecting members 10). The held wall portions 33 are joined to the both ends of the holding portion 31 in the connector's width direction and extends in the up-and-down direction.

As shown in FIGS. 7(A) and 7(B), there are four protrusions 32 formed on one side surface and three protrusions 32 are formed on the other side surface (see also FIG. 10). The respective protrusions 32 on each side surface are provided at the both end parts in the connector's width direction and at a middle part of the side surface in the connector's width direction so as to be at equal intervals. In other words, the protrusions 32 on the one side surface and the protrusions 32 on the other side surface are provided at the same positions at the both end parts, but at different positions at the middle part, when viewed in the arrangement direction of the connecting members (a perpendicular direction to the paper surface of FIGS. 7(A) and 7(B)) (see also FIG. 10).

As described above, according to the embodiment, adjacent receptacle-side connecting members 10 are disposed symmetrically to each other. Therefore, as shown in FIG. 10, in the adjacent receptacle-side connecting members, one side surfaces or the other side surfaces face each other. Those protrusions 32 on the side surfaces that face each other respectively form pairs. Protruding top surfaces of each pair of the protrusions 32 abut each other in the arrangement direction of the receptacle-side connecting

11

members 10. As a result, it is achievable to restrict the positions of the receptacle-side connecting members 10 in the arrangement direction. The protrusions 32 in each pair may have their protruding top surfaces abut against each other before mounting the receptacle connector 1 by soldering (see FIG. 10), or there may be formed slight gaps between the protruding top surfaces.

As shown in FIGS. 7(A) and 7(B), each of the held wall portions 33 has a flat held portion 33A and a restricting portion 33B. Each of the flat held portions 33A has a flat surface perpendicular to the arrangement direction of the receptacle terminals 20 and extends in the up-and-down direction. Each of the restricting portions 33B protrudes in the arrangement direction from the both upper flat surfaces of the held portion 33A (see also FIG. 5(A)). The flat held portions 33A are held being pressed from thereabove into the holding grooves 85 (see FIG. 2(B)) of the receptacle-side joining member 80. Moreover, as shown in FIGS. 7(A) and 7(B), the restricting portions 33B are positioned being close to outer ends of the flat surfaces of the flat held portions 33A in the connector's width direction. As shown in FIG. 5(A), by facing the flat surfaces of the receptacle-side joining members 80 at positions outside the receptacle-side joining members 80 in the connector's width direction, the restricting portions 33B restrict displacement of the receptacle-side connecting members 10 relative to the receptacle-side joining members 80 in the connector's width direction.

Each of the movable holding members 40 is made of an electrically insulating material such as resin and includes a base holding portion 41, a plurality of lower holding portions 42, and end holding portions 43. As shown in FIGS. 6(A), 7(A), and 7(B), the base holding portion 41 (see also FIG. 8(c)) extends over the whole arrangement range of the receptacle terminals 20 in the connector's width direction, which is an arrangement direction of the receptacle terminals 20. The base holding portion 41 holds all the receptacle terminals 20 thereon together. The plurality of lower holding portions 42 (see FIG. 8(C)) extends downward from the base holding portion 41 at positions having two adjacent signal terminals 20S therebetween in the connector's width direction. The end holding portions 43 extend downward at the both ends of the base holding portion 41 in the connector's width direction.

As shown in FIG. 6(A), the base holding portion 41 includes restraining surfaces 41A. The restraining surfaces 41A are formed on upper surfaces of the both ends of the base holding portion 41 in the connector's width direction. The restraining surfaces 41A restrict downward movement of the casing member 70 (see also FIG. 5(B)). The lower holding portions 42 are provided at positions so to have two signal terminals 20S between two adjacent lower holding portions 42. Each of the lower holding portions 42 holds side end portions (parts extending in the up-and-down direction) of the narrow portions 25A of the two signal terminals 20S, which are adjacent to each other. Each of the lower holding portions 42 covers the both sheet surfaces and the side end surfaces (sheet thickness surfaces) of the side end portions. In addition, each of the lower holding portions 42 includes a holding protrusion 44. The holding protrusions 44 protrude towards the arrangement direction from a sheet surface of the lower holding portion 42 (a surface perpendicular to the arrangement direction of the receptacle terminals 20). As will be described below, the holding protrusions 44 hold the grounding plates 50 and 60 (see FIG. 8(C)). The end holding portions 43 hold side end portions outside the grounding terminals 20G provided at the both ends in the arrangement range of the terminals. Moreover, the protruding top portions

12

of the holding protrusions 44 serve as pressure-receiving portions 44A. The pressure-receiving portions 44A receive pressing force from the casing member 70 when the casing member 70 deforms, as will be described later (see FIG. 13(B)).

As described above, according to the embodiment, the receptacle connector 1 includes the plurality of receptacle-side connecting members 10 arranged therein. Each of the receptacle-side connecting members 10 has a row of terminals. In each row, the movable holding member 40 holds all the upper held portions 25 of the receptacle terminals 20 therein together. In other words, in case of a conventional connector, one holding member holds all terminals in a plurality of rows together. However, according to the connector of the invention, terminals in each row can displace independently from terminals in other rows.

According to the embodiment, as described above, in each of the receptacle-side connecting members 10, the movable holding member 40 holds all terminals in each row of terminals together. However, it is not essentially required to hold all the terminals together. For example, a plurality of terminals that compose the row of terminals can be held together by a set of a few terminals, or held individually.

Each of the long grounding plates 50 is made by die-cutting of a sheet metal member and then bending it in the sheet's thickness direction. As shown in FIGS. 5(A) and 9(A), each of the long grounding plates 50 includes a plurality of long covering flat portion 51, and a strip-like ends 52 that extend in the up-and-down direction at both side ends in the arrangement range of the long covering flat portions 51. Each of the long grounding plates 50 is composed by joining the long covering flat portions 51 to each other, and joining the strip-like ends 52 to long covering flat portions 51.

As shown in FIGS. 7(B) and 8(C), each of the long covering flat portions 51 extends corresponding to the range between the contact portions 22 and the lower held portions 23 of the receptacle terminals 20 in the up-and-down direction. In the connector's width direction, as is well shown in FIG. 7(B), each of the long covering flat portions 51 extends in the range that corresponds to two adjacent signal terminals 20S. As shown in FIG. 9(A), each of the long covering flat portions 51 has a cantilever-like attachment portion 51A at an upper half part thereof. Each of the attachment portions 51A is formed by cutting and lifting the portion so as to have a free lower end. The attachment portions 51A extend being lifted from the sheet surfaces of long covering flat portions 51 and thereby being away from the receptacle terminals 20 as it goes downward. As a result, the attachment portions 51A are deformable in the sheet thickness direction. As will be described later, the attachment portions 51A serve as portion to attach to the casing members 70 (see FIG. 4(A)). Furthermore, each of the long covering flat portions 51 has a hole 51B, which penetrates in the sheet thickness direction, at a generally center area in a lower half part thereof. The holes 51B are to be held by the holding protrusions 44 of the movable holding member 40 in each of the receptacle-side connecting members 10. The long grounding plates 50 are held by the movable holding member 40 being thermally melted (thermally crimped) while the holding protrusions 44 of the movable holding members 40 are inserted in the holes 51B (see FIG. 8(C)).

As shown in FIG. 7(B), the strip-like ends 52 extend in the up-and-down direction over the range that corresponds to lower half of the long covering flat portion 51, so as to

13

correspond to positions of the end-holding portions **43** of the movable holding member **40** in the connector's width direction.

As shown in FIGS. **5(A)** and **9(A)**, the long covering flat portions **51** are joined each other and the long covering flat portions **51** and the strip-like ends **52** are joined each other, by joining portions that are provided at three positions in the up-and-down direction. As shown in FIG. **5(A)**, those joining portions **51** are provided at positions of the grounding terminals **20G** in the connector's width direction. Among them, the uppermost joining portions and the lowermost joining portions are bent to protrude towards the grounding terminals **20G** in the sheet thickness direction. The protruding top surfaces (flat surfaces) thereof are formed as grounding contact portions **53** that contact with sheet surfaces of the grounding terminals **20G** (see FIG. **8(B)**). Hereunder, the grounding contact portions **53** at the uppermost positions are referred to as "upper grounding contact portions **53A**", and the grounding contact portions **53** at the lowermost positions are referred to as "lower grounding contact portions **53B**". More specifically, as is well shown in FIG. **8(B)**, the upper grounding contact portions **53A** are provided corresponding to positions right above the upper held portions **25G** of the grounding terminals **20G**. The lower grounding contact portions **53B** are provided corresponding to the range of the upper half portions and narrow portions **25A** of the deformable portions **24G** of the grounding terminals **20G** in the up-and-down direction.

Similarly to the long grounding plates **50**, the short grounding plates **60** are made by die-cutting a sheet metal member and bending in the sheet thickness direction. As is well shown in FIG. **9(B)**, each of the short grounding plates **60** has the same shape as that of the long grounding plate **50**, but does not have the upper part that is above the grounding contact portions **53B** of the long grounding plate **50**. More specifically, each of the short grounding plates **60** includes a plurality of short covering flat portions **61** and strip-like ends **62** disposed at the ends of the arrangement range of the short covering flat portions **61**. The short covering flat portions **61** are joined to each other and the short covering flat portions **62** and the grounding contact portions **63** are joined to each other, by grounding contact portions **63**.

As shown in FIG. **7(A)**, each of the short covering flat portions **61** is provided over the range corresponding to two signal terminals **20S** that are adjacent to each other in the connector's width direction. Each of the short covering flat portions **61** has a hole **61B**, which penetrates in the sheet thickness direction. The short covering flat portions **61** are formed to be held by the holding protrusions **44** of the movable holding member **40** through thermal fusion at positions that are slightly close to the upper ends thereof. Moreover, being different from the long covering flat portions **51**, each of the short covering flat portions **61** does not have an attachment portion for its attachment to the casing member **70**.

As shown in FIG. **7(A)**, the grounding contact portions **63** are provided in the range corresponding to the grounding terminals **20G** in the connector's width direction. As shown in FIG. **8(B)**, the grounding contact portions **63** contact with sheet surfaces of the grounding terminals **20G** at their protruding top surfaces (flat surfaces) that protrude towards the grounding terminals **20G**.

Each of the casing members **70** is made of an electrically insulating material such as resin. In addition, each of the casing members **70** has an outer shape of a generally rectangular parallelepiped with the connector's width direction being its longitudinal direction. Each of the casing

14

members **70** includes two side walls **71**, two end walls **72**, and walls to be restricted **73**. The two side walls **71** extend in the connector's width direction. The two end walls **72** extend in the arrangement direction of the receptacle-side connecting members **10** and join ends of the side walls **71**. The walls to be restricted are adjacent to the end walls **72** at positions outside the end walls **72** in the connector's width direction, and are joined to outer surfaces of the respective end walls **72**.

Furthermore, each of the casing members **70** has a middle wall **75** in the center in the terminal arrangement direction (see FIGS. **10**, **12**, and **13**). Each of the middle walls **75** extends in the connector's width direction (i.e., terminal arrangement direction) between the two facing end walls **72**, and joins bottom parts of the end walls **72**. Each of the middle walls **75** has thru holes **75A**, which penetrate in the up-and-down direction, are arranged at a plurality of positions in the connector's width direction (see FIG. **10**).

On inner surface of each of the side walls **71**, there is formed an accommodating concave portion **71A** to accommodate the receptacle-side connecting member **10** (see FIGS. **12(A)** and **12(B)**). As shown in FIG. **5(A)**, on an upper part of each side wall **71**, there is formed and arranged a plurality of grooves **71B** to accommodate the receptacle terminals **20**. In addition, on an upper edge of the inner surface of each side wall **71**, there are formed guiding surfaces **71C**. The guiding surfaces **71C** are sloped so that they are away from each other as they go upward in the facing direction of the side walls **71** (arrangement direction of the receptacle-side connecting members **10**). As will be described later, the guiding surfaces **71C** guide in the arrangement direction the fitting portions (fitting walls **122**, which will be described later) of the plug connector **2** to the receiving portions **76**, which will be described later.

In addition, in each of the side walls **71**, there are formed attachment holes **71D** to correspondingly receive the attachment portions **51A** of the long covering flat portions **51** of the long grounding plates **50**. The attachment holes **71D** penetrate the side wall **71** in the wall thickness direction. As shown in FIG. **4(A)**, among the ends that form the attachment holes **71D**, lower edges thereof are locked at the lower ends (free ends) of the attachment portions **51A**. As a result, the receptacle-side connecting members **10** are prevented from coming off from the casing member **70**. Moreover, as shown in FIG. **5(B)**, at the positions corresponding to the restricting surfaces **41A** (see FIG. **5(A)**) of the receptacle-side connecting members **10** in the connector's width direction, each of the side walls **71A** has an outer wall **71E** and an inner wall **71F**, which are adjacent to each other in the wall thickness direction. The outer walls **71E** and the inner walls **71F** are joined at their upper ends. Lower ends of the inner walls **71F** are provided above lower ends of the outer walls **71E**. The lower end surfaces of the inner walls **71F** (surfaces perpendicular to the up-and-down direction) abut the restricting surfaces **41A** so as to form surfaces to be restricted **71F-1**, which restrict downward movement of the casing members **70**.

As shown in FIG. **4(A)**, the walls to be restricted **73** are joined at their lower parts to middle parts of the outer surfaces of the end walls **72** in the up-and-down direction. Each of the walls to be restricted **73** has a concave portion to be restricted **73A** (see FIG. **12(A)**), which is dented on inner surface (wall surface that faces outer surface of the end wall **72**) thereof and is open downward. The concave portions to be restricted **73A** are concave portions that extend perpendicularly to the connector's width direction. The concave portions to be restricted **73A** receive the long

15

flat portions **83** (which will be described later) of the receptacle-side joining members **80** from thereunder (see FIG. 12(A)). As will be described later, among the inner wall surfaces that form the concave portions to be restricted **73A**, surfaces perpendicular to the arrangement direction of the receptacle-side connecting members **10** (left-and-right direction in FIG. 12(A)) can abut the side edges of the long flat portions **83**. As a result, it is achievable to restrict angular displacement of the casing member **70**, which exceeds a specified amount, around the connector's width direction (a direction perpendicular to the paper surface of FIG. 12(A)). Moreover, between the walls to be restricted **73** and the end walls **72**, there are formed slits **74** in the arrangement direction (see FIG. 4(A)). The slits **74** are open upward and receive the plug-side joining members **150** of the plug connector **2** in the connector fitted state.

As shown in FIGS. 1 and 2(A), each of the receptacle-side joining members **80** is made by die-cutting a sheet metal member that extends in the arrangement direction and bending in the sheet thickness direction. The receptacle-side joining members **80** are disposed at both sides of the receptacle-side connecting members **10** in the connector's width direction, with their sheet surfaces being perpendicular to the connector's width direction. The receptacle-side joining members **80** extend over the whole arrangement range of the receptacle-side connecting members **10** in the arrangement direction, and as will be described later, join and hold all the receptacle-side connecting members **10**. According to the embodiment, the receptacle-side joining members **80** are made of metal having equivalent coefficient of thermal expansion to that of the circuit board, e.g., general copper alloy such as phosphor bronze.

Each of the receptacle-side joining members **80** includes a straight basal portion **81**, short flat portions **82** and long flat portions **83**, and soldering portions **84**. The straight basal portions **81** extend straight over the whole arrangement range of the receptacle-side connecting members **10** in the arrangement direction. The short flat portions **82** and the long flat portions **83** rise from upper edges of each of the straight basal portions **81**, and are alternately disposed at specified intervals in the arrangement direction of the connecting members **10**. The soldering portions **84** extend outward in the connector's width direction from lower edge of each of the straight basal portions **81** at the same positions as those of the long flat portions **83** in the arrangement direction of the connecting members **10** (the longitudinal direction of the receptacle connector **1**).

The short flat portions **82** are provided so as to correspond to positions between casing members **70** that are adjacent to each other. The short flat portions **82** extend having substantially same height dimension as those of the held wall portions **33** of the stationary holding members **30**. As shown in FIG. 2(B), each of the short flat portions **82** has a hole **82A**, which is a through hole that extends in the up-and-down direction and penetrates in the sheet thickness direction. Each of the short flat portions **82** has short arms **82B** provided on the both sides of the hole **82A**.

In addition, the long flat portions **83** are provided so as to correspond to the positions of the respective casing members **70**. As shown in FIG. 2(B), the long flat portions **83** are formed taller than the short flat portions **82** in the up-and-down direction, and slightly smaller than the concave portions to be restricted **73A** of the walls to be restricted **73** of the casing members **70** in the arrangement direction of the connecting members **70** (see FIG. 5(B)). Each of the long flat portions **83** has a hole **83A**, which extends in the up-and-down direction and penetrates in the sheet thickness

16

direction. Each of the long flat portions **83** also has long arms **83B** on the both sides of the hole **83A**. Each of the both long arms **83B** is chamfered on its upper end's corners, such that each of the long flat portions **83** has a smaller width on its upper end.

As will be described later, the upper half portions of the long flat portions **83** are accommodated in the concave portions to be restricted **73A** of the casing members **70** from below (see FIG. 5(B)). As described above, the long flat portions **83** are slightly smaller than the concave portions to be restricted **73A** in the arrangement direction. Therefore, there are gaps formed between the upper half portions of the long flat portions **83** and the inner wall surfaces of the concave portions to be restricted **73A** in the arrangement direction. Moreover, since the outer edges of upper end corners of the long arms **83B** are chamfered, the casing members **70** can make angular displacement, having the connector's width direction as an axis of the displacement, i.e., displacement such that the casing members tilt in the arrangement direction (see FIGS. 13(A) through 13(C)). In short, the upper half portions of the long flat portions **83** serve as restricting portions that restrict the above-described angular displacement of the casing members **70**, when the displacements are greater than certain amount.

The soldering portions **84** are to be disposed and fixed to connect by soldering to corresponding parts on a mounting surface of the circuit board. As is well shown in FIG. 2(B), each of the soldering portions **84** has a securing hole **84A** that penetrates therethrough in the sheet thickness direction. Upon connecting by soldering, molten solder flows in the securing holes **84A** and thereby it is achievable to enhance strength of securing the soldering portions **84** to the corresponding portions.

As shown in FIG. 2(B), between the short flat portions **82** and the long flat portions **83**, there are provided grooves that extend in the up-and-down direction and open upward. The grooves are formed as holding grooves **85** and receive to hold the flat held portions **33A** of the stationary holding members **30** of the receptacle-side connecting members **10** from above, when they are pressed therein.

[Assembling of the Receptacle Connector]

The receptacle connector **1** having the above-described configuration may be assembled as follows: Press the plurality of the receptacle-side connecting members **10** onto the two receptacle-side joining members **80** so as to be arranged and held therebetween. Then, attach each of the casing members **70** to a pair of the receptacle-side connecting members **10** that are adjacent to each other so as to accommodate them therein. Hereunder, how to assemble the receptacle connector **1** will be described in detail.

First, the receptacle-side connecting members **10** are prepared. More specifically, the lower held portions **23** of the receptacle terminals **20** arranged in the connector's width direction are integrally molded with the stationary holding member **30** so as to be held thereby. In addition, the upper held portions **25** of the receptacle terminals **20** are integrally molded with the movable holding portion **40** so as to be held thereby. Those integral molding steps may be performed in any order or performed at the same time. Thereafter, the holding protrusions **44** on one surface of the movable holding member **40** are inserted in the holes **51B** of the long grounding plates **50**. Then, the holding protrusions **44** are heated, so as to flatten to widen the protruding ends of the holding protrusions **44**. As a result, the holding protrusions **44** are thermally fused to the grounding plates **50** (see FIG. 8(C)). In addition, the holding protrusions **44** on the other surface of the movable holding members **40** are inserted in

17

the holes 61B of the short grounding plates 60. Then, similarly to the long grounding plates 50, the holding protrusions 44 are thermally fused to the short grounding plates 60 (see FIG. 8(C)). As a result, each of the movable holding members 40 holds the grounding plates 50 and 60 and thereby the receptacle-side connecting member 10 is completed. According to the embodiment, the step of holding the long grounding plate 50 and the step of holding the short grounding plate may be done at the same time. Instead, either of the steps may be performed before the other step. Next, orientating the casing member 70 by flipping upside down (so as to have the guiding surfaces 71 be on the lower side), the receptacle-side connecting members 10 are tentatively inserted in each of the two concave portions 71A of the casing member 70 from above (from the side opposite the guiding surfaces 71C). At this point, the pair of the receptacle-side connecting members 10 to be tentatively inserted in the casing member 70 is tentatively inserted such that the convexly curved surfaces of the contact portions 22 of the receptacle terminals 20 face each other. The tentatively inserted receptacle-side connecting members 10 remain in a state only a part of the receptacle-side connecting member 10 is accommodated in the accommodating concave portions 71A.

Next, the receptacle-side joining members 80 are brought to the respective receptacle-side connecting members 10 from above, so as to have the holding grooves 85 of the receptacle-side joining members 80 tentatively hold the flat held portions 33A of the stationary holding members 30 in the receptacle-side connecting members 10. In the state of being tentatively held, the flat held portions 33A are not pressed in the holding grooves 85 yet, and remain in the state only a part of each flat held portion 33A entered in the holding groove 85.

Then, press the receptacle-side connecting members 10 and the receptacle-side joining members 80 therein at the same time from above. At this point, being pressed onto the inner wall surfaces of the side walls 71 of each of the casing members 70, the attachment portions 51A of the long grounding plates 50 provided in the receptacle-side connecting members 10 elastically deform. Once the attachment holes 71D of the side walls 71 reach the positions of the attachment portions 51A, the attachment portions 51 return to their free state and enter the attachment holes 71D. As a result, the receptacle-side connecting members 10 are accommodated in the accommodating concave portions 71A of the casing members 70. At the same time, the lower ends of the attachment portions 51A and the lower edges of the attachment holes 71D are able to engage, so that it is possible to prevent coming off from the casing members 70. Attachment of the receptacle-side connecting members 10 is completed by abutting of the surfaces to be restricted 71F-1 of the casing members 70 to the restricting surfaces 41A of the receptacle-side connecting members 10 (see FIG. 5(B)).

Moreover, once the receptacle-side joining members 80 are pressed in, the flat held portions 33A of the receptacle-side connecting members 10 are pressed in the holding holes 85 of the receptacle-side joining members 80 and held therein. According to the embodiment, each pair of the receptacle-side connecting members 10 is held in the holding grooves 85 provided on both sides of each long flat portion 83 of the receptacle-side joining members 80. In addition, the long flat portions 83 of the receptacle-side joining members 80 enter the concave portions to be restricted 73A of the walls to be restricted 73 of the casing members 70 from above.

18

While being in the state that the attachment of the receptacle-side connecting members 10 and the receptacle-side joining members 80 to the casing members 70 is completed, the space formed between the two receptacle-side connecting members 10 in the casing members 70 are formed as receiving portions 76 to receive the fitting portions (fitting walls 122 that will be described later) of the connecting members 110 provided in the plug connector 2 (see FIGS. 1, 2, 4(A), etc.). Moreover, upper ends of the receptacle terminals 20 are accommodated in the grooves 71B of the casing members 70. In addition, the protruding top surfaces, i.e., pressure-receiving portions 44A, of the holding protrusions 44 formed on the both side surfaces of the movable holding members 40 respectively get close to and face the inner surfaces of the side walls 71 or side walls of the middle walls 75 (see FIG. 12(B)). Moreover, in the concave portions to be restricted 73A of the walls to be restricted 73 of the casing members 70, a part of the long flat portions 83 of the joining members 80 (upper half parts in FIG. 5(B)) is accommodated. Accordingly, the receptacle-side connecting members 10 and the receptacle-side joining members 80 are attached to the casing members, and thereby assembling of the receptacle connector 1 is completed.

[Configuration of the Plug Connector 2]

Next, a configuration of the plug connector 2 will be described. As shown in FIG. 3(A), the plug connector 2 includes a plurality of plug-side connecting members 110 and two plug-side joining members 150. The plurality of plug-side connecting members 110 is arranged in an arrangement direction, which is one direction horizontal to the mounting surface of the circuit board (not illustrated). The two plug-side connecting members 150 extend in the arrangement direction over the arrangement range of the plurality of plug-side connecting members 110, and join and hold the plurality of connecting members 110. According to the embodiment, as shown in FIG. 3(A), the plurality of plug-side connecting members 110 is arranged so as to form space between adjacent plug-side connecting members 110 (see also FIGS. 11(A) through 11(C)). The dimension of each space is set greater than the thermal expansion of the plug-side connecting members 110.

As shown in FIG. 3(A), each of the plug-side connecting members 110 includes a housing 120, a plurality of plug terminals 130, and two grounding plates 140. The housing 120 extends, having the connector's width direction (the same direction as the connector's width direction of the receptacle connector 1) as a longitudinal direction thereof. The housing 120 serves as a terminal holding member made of an electrically insulating material. The plurality of plug terminals 130 is arranged in the connector's width direction and held by the housing 120. The two grounding plates 140 are held in each of the housings 120 (see FIG. 3(B)).

As shown in FIG. 4(A), each of the housings 120 extends, having the connector's width direction as a longitudinal direction thereof, and is formed to have substantially the same dimension as that of the receptacle connector 1 in the direction. As shown in FIG. 4(B), each of the housings 120 has a basal portion 121, which forms a lower part of the housing 120, and a fitting wall 122, which rises upward from the basal portion 121. The fitting walls 122 are formed as fitting portions to fit to the receiving portions 76 of the receptacle connector 1. As shown in FIG. 4(B), an upper part of each of the fitting walls 122 has a slanted surface, which is sloped such that the both side surfaces get close to each other as it goes upward and has a tapered shape when viewed in the connector's width direction. The slanted surfaces are formed as surfaces to be guided 122A, which are guided by

19

the guiding surfaces 71C of the receptacle-side connecting members 10 in the connector fitting process.

Moreover, each of the housings 120 includes a plurality of terminal accommodating portions 123, which extend in the up-and-down direction. The plurality of terminal accommodating portions 123 is arranged at equal intervals in the connector's width direction. The plurality of terminal accommodating portions 123 accommodates and holds the plug terminals 130. As shown in FIGS. 11(B) and 11(C), in the range of each of the fitting walls 122, the terminal accommodating portions 123 are formed as grooves extending in the up-and-down direction on the both side surfaces (surfaces perpendicular to the arrangement direction of the plug-side connecting members 110) of each of the fitting walls 122, which extends in the connector's width direction. In the range of each of the basal portions 121, the terminal accommodating portions 123 are formed in the up-and-down direction as holes that connect to the grooves and penetrate the basal portions 121. In addition, each of the terminal accommodating portions 123 to accommodate a grounding terminal 130G, (which will be described later, has on its groove's bottom (inner wall surface perpendicular to the arrangement direction) an opening that is opened inward in the arrangement direction. From the openings, contact portions 132G of the grounding terminals 130 are exposed. As a result, as will be described later, the grounding contact portions 141 of the grounding plates 140 can contact with the contact portions 132G of the grounding terminals 130G (see FIG. 11(B)).

Each of the plug terminals 130 is made by die-cutting a sheet metal member in its sheet thickness direction, and has a strip-like shape extending straight in the up-and-down direction as a whole. The plug terminals 130 are pressed in the terminal accommodating portions 123 of the housing 120 from therebelow with their sheet surfaces being perpendicular to the arrangement direction and held therein, so as to be arranged in the connector's width direction.

The plurality of plug terminals 130 serve as the signal terminals 130S or the grounding terminals 130G. According to the embodiment, the signal terminals 130S and the grounding terminals 130G are arranged corresponding to the arrangement of the signal terminals 20S and the grounding terminals 20G. More specifically, the plug terminals 130 are arranged so as to have two signal terminals 130S, which are adjacent to each other, between the grounding terminals 130G. Hereunder, when there is no need to specify if the terminal 130 is the signal terminal 130S or the grounding terminal 130G, the configuration will be described simply using the term, "plug terminal 130". Moreover, when it is necessary to specify if the terminal 130 is the signal terminal 130S or the grounding terminal 130G, "S" will be affixed to the reference numeral of each portion of the signal terminal 130S, and "G" will be affixed after reference numeral of each part of the grounding terminal 130G.

As shown in FIGS. 11(B) and 11(C), the plug terminals 130 are provided on the both side surfaces of each of the fitting walls 122 of the housing 120. The plug terminals 130 are provided to form two rows that are symmetrical about the fitting wall 122 in the wall thickness direction of the fitting wall 122 (the arrangement direction of the plug-side connecting members 110). As shown in FIGS. 11(B) and 11(C), the plug terminals 130 have at their lower ends (one ends) the connecting portions 131 to be connected by soldering to the circuit portion of the mounting surface of the circuit board. The plug terminals 130 have, at their upper ends (the other ends), contact portions 132 to contact with the receptacle terminals 20 provided on the receptacle

20

connector 1. The connecting portions 131 and the contact portions 132 are joined by held portions 133. As shown in FIGS. 11(B) and 11(C), contact portions 132 extend in the up-and-down direction within the grooves of the terminal accommodating portions 123. Sheet surfaces of the contact portions 132 are exposed from the side surfaces of each of the fitting walls 122.

Each of the grounding plates 140 is made by presswork and bending of a sheet metal member. As shown in FIG. 3(B), each of the grounding plates 140 has a grounding main member 141 and grounding legs 145. The grounding main member 141 has a sheet surface perpendicular to the arrangement direction of the plug-side connecting members 110 and extends generally the whole range of the plug-side connecting member 110 in the connector's width direction. The grounding legs 142 are provided on the both ends of each of the grounding main bodies 141 in the connector's width direction so as to extend from a lower edge thereof. Moreover, in the respective two grounding plates 140, one grounding plate 140 also has joining portions 143, which will be described later. With those joining portions 143, the grounding main member 141 is joined to the plug-side joining members 150, which will be described later. In other words, the one grounding plates 140 and the plug-side joining member 150 are integrally formed as one member. According to the embodiment, the grounding plates 140 and the plug-side joining members 150 are made of metal that has similar coefficient of thermal expansion to that of the circuit board, for example, general copper alloy such as phosphor bronze.

As shown in FIGS. 11(B) and 11(C), each of the grounding main bodies 141 extends inside the fitting wall 122 of each of the housings 120, in short, between the terminal rows of the plug terminals 130, in the connector's width direction (a direction perpendicular to the paper surface of FIGS. 11(B) and 11(C)). In other words, each of the grounding main bodies 141 is provided on the side opposite the contact surfaces of the contact portions 132 in the two sheet surfaces of the plug terminals 130. Furthermore, as shown in FIGS. 11(B) and 11(C), each of the grounding main bodies 141 is provided in the range that corresponds to the contact portions 132 of the plug terminals 130 in the up-and-down direction.

As shown in FIG. 11(C), each of the grounding main bodies 141 has a grounding contact portion 141A, which protrudes towards the grounding terminals 130G and extends in the up-and-down direction (see also FIG. 3(B)). The grounding contact portions 141A are made by presswork. As shown in FIG. 11(C), the grounding contact portions 141A contacts with sheet surfaces of the contact portions 132G of the grounding terminals 130G at their protruding top surfaces (flat surfaces).

According to the embodiment, as shown in FIGS. 3(B) and 11(C), the two grounding plates 140 are provided symmetrically so as to have their grounding contact portions 141A protrude being opposite each other in the arrangement direction. The grounding plates 140 are held in the housing 120 by integral molding.

The grounding legs 142 are to be connected to corresponding grounding circuit portion (not illustrated) of the circuit board at their ends.

In addition, the grounding plates 140 joined to the plug-side joining members 150 have joining portions 143 on the both ends of the grounding main bodies 141. The joining portions 143 join the plug-side joining members 150 and the grounding main bodies 141. As shown in FIG. 3(B), the joining portions 143, when viewed from thereabove, extend

21

in generally L-shapes having sheet surfaces perpendicular to the up-and-down direction. The joining portions **143** join an upper edge of each of the grounding main bodies **141** to upper edges of the plug-side joining members **150**.

As shown in FIG. 3(A), the plug-side joining members **150** are oriented having their sheet surfaces be perpendicular to the connector's width direction. The plug-side joining members **150** are provided on the both ends of the plug-side connecting members **110** in the connector's width direction. The plug-side joining members **150** extend over the whole arrangement range of the plug-side connecting members **110** in the arrangement direction. As already described above, the plug-side joining members **150** are joined to the grounding plates **140** provided on the respective plug-side connecting members via the joining portions **143**.

According to the embodiment, the grounding plates **140** are electrically connected to each other via the plug-side joining members **150**. Therefore, it is achievable to enhance the grounding effect. Furthermore, the plug-side joining members **150** cover with their sheet surfaces end surfaces of the plug-side connecting members **110** (surfaces perpendicular to the connector's width direction). Therefore, the plug-side joining members **150** can also serve as shielding plates.

In addition, according to the embodiment, grounding plates **140** and the plug-side joining members **150** are integrally made of the same sheet metal members. However, it may not be necessary to make them from the same members. Alternatively, the grounding plates **140** and the plug-side joining members **150** may be separately made as different members.

[Assembling of the Plug Connector 2]

The plug connector **2** having the above-described configuration may be prepared as follows. First, while having sheet surfaces of the grounding main bodies **141** of two grounding plates **140** face each other in the arrangement direction, the grounding main bodies **141** are integrally molded to be held by the housing **120**. Upon performing the integral molding, in the grounding plates **140** joined to the plug-side joining members **150**, the joining parts between the joining portions **143** and the plug-side joining members **150** are not bent. The sheet surfaces of the plug-side joining members **150** are perpendicular to the up-and-down direction. Next, the joining parts between the joining portions **143** and the plug-side joining members **150** are bent at a right angle in the sheet thickness direction so as to have the plug-side joining members **150** be close and face the end surface of the housing **120** (see FIG. 3(A)). Then, pressing the plug terminals **130** into the terminal accommodating portions **123** of the housing **120** from therebelow to be held therein, the plug connector **2** is completed.

[Mounting of the Connectors 1 and 2 onto the Circuit Board]

Next, mounting of the receptacle connector **1** and the plug connector **2** onto the circuit board will be described. The connecting portions **21** of the receptacle terminals **20**, which are provided on all the receptacle-side connecting members **10**, are connected to corresponding circuit portions of the circuit board by soldering. The soldering portions **84** of the receptacle-side joining members **80** are corresponding portions of the circuit board. As a result, the receptacle connector **1** is mounted on the circuit board by soldering.

The receptacle connector **1** may be mounted on the circuit board by soldering, for example by reflow soldering with the circuit board while the receptacle connector **1** is disposed on the mounting surface of the circuit board. Upon the mounting by soldering, the receptacle-side connecting members (especially the stationary holding members **30** and the

22

movable holding members **40**), the receptacle-side joining members **80**, and the circuit board are respectively thermally expanded. According to the embodiment, the receptacle-side joining members **80** are made of metal having the same coefficients of thermal expansion as that of the circuit board. Therefore, there is hardly any difference in the coefficients of thermal expansion between them. For this reason, the thermal expansions of them are substantially the same. As a result, in the parts of the receptacle-side connecting members **10**, which are held by the receptacle-side joining members **80**, to be mounted onto the coefficients of thermal expansion, there is no residual stress due to the difference in the coefficients of thermal expansion, or hardly any residual stress.

Moreover, in the receptacle connector **1**, the plurality of receptacle-side connecting members **10** are joined and held by the receptacle-side joining members **80**. Therefore, upon mounting by soldering, the terminal holding members (the stationary holding members **30** and the movable holding members **40**) of the plurality of receptacle-side connecting members **10** respectively thermally expand in a small amount. More specifically, as a whole connector, the terminal holding members (**30** and **40**) deform in the arrangement direction, such that the deformation is dispersed over the whole range of the receptacle-side connecting members in the arrangement direction. Therefore, the connecting members will not deform with a large amount of thermal expansion as in conventional connector, in which a plurality of terminals is held by only one housing. As a result, it is achievable to satisfactorily secure the state of the receptacle terminals **20** being mounted on the circuit portions of the circuit board by soldering.

As described above, the stationary holding members **30** are formed such that the protrusions **32** to restrict positions in the arrangement direction protrude towards the arrangement direction from side surfaces of the holding portions **31**. The stationary holding members **30** are made upon integral molding with the receptacle terminals **20**. Upon the integral molding, once melted electrically insulating material (e.g., resin material) is poured in a molding die, the electrically insulating material flows in the arrangement direction inside the die corresponding to the protrusions **32**. Generally speaking, it is known that electrically insulating materials such as glass fiber-containing resin (LCP, etc.) for use in connectors have very small coefficients of thermal expansion in a direction along the flow of the molten material in comparison with those in a direction perpendicular to the flow. Therefore, the protrusions **32**, which are made of electrically insulating material flown in the arrangement direction, have small coefficients of thermal expansion in the arrangement direction, which is a direction along the flow. In addition, the protrusions **32** have smaller coefficients of thermal expansion than those of the receptacle-side joining members **80**. Accordingly, upon the mounting by soldering, the thermal expansion of the protrusions **32** in the arrangement direction is small. As a result, it is achievable to restrain as much as possible the influence of the thermal expansion of the protrusions **32** that contact each other on the deformation of the whole receptacle connector **1** in the arrangement direction.

Furthermore, according to the embodiment, there is the plurality of protrusions **32** provided on each of the both side surfaces of the receptacle-side connecting members **10**. Those protrusions **32** are provided at different positions between those side surfaces in a middle range (range except the both ends) in the connector's width direction, when viewed in the arrangement direction. Accordingly, when the

23

protrusions **32** are provided at different positions between the side surfaces from each other, upon the mounting by soldering, it is achievable to avoid transmission of abutting force (external force) from the adjacent receptacle-side connecting member **10** to the receptacle-side connecting member that abuts on the other side by thermal expansion in the arrangement direction. For example, when the protrusions **32** on one side surface receive abutting force from the protrusions **32** of the receptacle-side connecting members **10** that are adjacent on the other side surface, there is no protrusion at positions corresponding to the protrusions **32** on the one side surface, which receives the abutting force, on the other surface of the receptacle-side connecting member **10**. Accordingly, the abutting force will not be transmitted to the receptacle-side connecting member **10** that is adjacent on the other side surface, and is dispersed with a component along the other surface. As a result, it is achievable to further reduce the external force (abutting force) exerted on the receptacle-side connecting members **10** in the arrangement direction, and in turn the residual stress in the parts being mounted by soldering.

In this embodiment, it is not essentially required to have the protrusions **32** on one side surface and the protrusions **32** on the other side surface of each of the receptacle-side connecting members **10** be provided on different positions when viewed in the according to the embodiment. As long as it is achievable to sufficiently reduce the residual stress that occurs in the part mounted by soldering, all the protrusions **32** may be provided at the same positions.

The plug connector **2** may be mounted on the circuit board by soldering, by respectively connecting the connecting portions **131** of the plug terminals **130** provided on the all the plug-side connecting members **110** and the grounding legs **142** of the grounding plates **140** onto corresponding circuit portions of the circuit board by soldering.

For mounting the plug connector **2** by soldering, similarly to the receptacle connector **1**, while disposing the plug connector **2** on a mounting surface of the circuit board, the plug connector **2** is mounted by reflow soldering with the circuit board. Moreover, according to the embodiment, the plug-side joining members **150** are made of metal having the same coefficient of thermal expansion as that of the circuit board. Therefore, there is hardly difference in the coefficient of thermal expansion between the plug-side joining members **150** and the circuit board. As a result, the thermal expansions are substantially the same between them. Therefore, on the parts to be mounted of the plug connecting members **110**, which are held by the plug-side joining members **150**, onto the circuit board, there is no residual stress or hardly any residual stress occurred due to the coefficients of thermal expansion.

In addition, the plug connector **2** includes the plurality of plug-side connecting members **110**, which are joined and held by the plug-side joining members **150**.

Therefore, similarly to the above-described receptacle connector **1**, when the whole connector is viewed, the housing **120** deforms in the arrangement direction with the deformation spreading over the whole area in the arrangement direction of the receptacle-side connecting members **10**. As a result, it is achievable to satisfactorily secure the mounted state by soldering between the plug terminals **130** and the circuit board.

Moreover, according to the embodiment, adjacent plug-side connecting members **110** are arranged with spaces therebetween greater than the amount of thermal expansion of the plug-side connecting members **110** in the arrangement direction of the plug-side connecting members **110** by

24

mounting onto the circuit board. Accordingly, upon mounting by soldering, when the respective plug-side connecting members **110** are in the thermally expanded state within the range of the gaps in the arrangement direction, adjacent plug-side connecting members **110** will not abut against each other. As a result, when the whole connector is viewed, it is achievable to prevent warping or twisting of the connector **2** due to abutting between the connecting members, and also achievable to more securely prevent occurrence of the residual stress at the mounted parts by soldering.

According to the embodiment, the joining members **80** and **150** are made of metals having similar coefficients of thermal expansion to each other. Alternatively, for example, the joining members **80** and **150** can be also made of resin having similar coefficient of thermal expansion to that of the circuit board. Even in case of making the joining members **80** and **150** from such resin, the thermal expansion of the joining members **80** and **150** and the thermal expansion of the circuit board are substantially the same. Therefore, it is achievable to minimize generation of the residual stress at the mounted parts of the connecting members **10** and **110** onto the circuit board due to the difference in the coefficients of thermal expansion. The resin having similar coefficient of thermal expansion to that of the circuit board may include polyamide resin such as 9T Nylon manufactured by Kuraray. [Fitting of Connectors]

Next, operation of fitting the receptacle connector **1** and the plug connector **2**, which are respectively mounted on the circuit boards, will be described. First, as shown in FIGS. **1**, **4(A)**, and **12(A)**, directing the receiving portion **76** of the receptacle connector **1** so as to open upward and the fitting walls **122** (fitting portions) of the plug connector **2** so as to extend downward from the basal portion **121**, the plug connector **2** is brought above the receptacle connector **1**. Then, the fitting walls **122** of the respective plug-side connecting members **110** are positioned corresponding to the receiving portions of the casing members **70**.

Next, the plug connector **2** is moved downward and the respective plug-side connecting members **110** are fitted to the respective corresponding receptacle-side connecting members **10** from above. At this point, the fitting walls **122** of the respective plug-side connecting members **110** elastically deform the receptacle terminals **20** of the two receptacle-side connecting members **10**, which face each other in the arrangement direction, so as to be away from each other, i.e., to widen between the receptacle terminals **20**, and then enter the receiving portions **76**. On the other hand, the plug-side joining members **150** of the plug connector **2** enter the slits **74** of the respective casing members **70**.

As shown in FIG. **12(B)**, once the receptacle-side connecting members **10** and the plug-side connecting members **110** fit to each other, the contact portions **22** of the receptacle terminals **20** and the contact portions **132** of the plug terminals **130** contact each other with certain contact pressure. As a result, the contact portions **22** and the contact portions **132** are electrically connected to each other. More specifically, the contact portions **22S** of the signal terminals **20S** contact with the contact portions **132S** of the signal terminals **130S** (see FIG. **12(B)**). The contact portions **32G** of the grounding terminals **20G** contact the contact portions **132G** of the grounding terminals **130G**. As a result, all the receptacle-side connecting members **10** and plug-side connecting members **110** fit to each other, and thereby the fitting between the receptacle connector **1** and the plug connector **2** is completed.

Next, operation of fitting will be described for when the connectors **1** and **2** when relative positions of the receptacle

25

connector 1 and the plug connector 2 are not aligned in the arrangement direction of the connecting members 10 and 11. When the relative positions of the connectors 1 and 2 are not aligned in the arrangement direction right before fitting the connectors 1 and 2, right after starting the fitting of connectors, first, the surfaces to be guided 122A of the fitting walls 122 of the plug-side connecting members 110 abut against the guiding surfaces 71C of the casing members 70 of the receptacle connector 1. Furthermore, when the plug connector 2 is moved downward, the casing members 70 receive pressing force, which directs toward the side where the plug-side connecting members 110 are not aligned in the arrangement direction, from the surfaces to be guided 122A of the plug-side connecting members 110. As a result, the casing members 70 make angular displacement relative to the stationary holding members 30, so as to tilt towards the side where the plug-side connecting members 110 are misaligned, with the connector's width direction being a rotational axis.

Once the casing members 70 make angular displacement, in the two receptacle-side connecting members 10 in the casing member 70, the pressure-receiving portions 44A of the movable holding members 40 receive pressing force from the side walls 71 or the middle wall 75 of the respective casing members 70. At the same time, the movable holding members 40 receive pressing force via the long grounding plates 50 from the outer walls 71E of the side walls 71 or via the short grounding plates 60 from the middle wall 75 (see FIG. 13(C)).

According to the embodiment, as described above, the terminal row of the receptacle terminals 10 (the row of the receptacle terminals 10 arranged in the connector's width direction in each of the receptacle-side connecting members 10) and each of the movable holding members 40 to hold the terminal row can displace in the arrangement direction, independently from terminal rows in other receptacle-side connecting members 10. Therefore, when the pressure-receiving portions 44A of the movable holding members 40 receive pressing force, the movable holding members 40 do not displace straight in the displacement direction, but as shown in FIGS. 13(A) through 14(C), make angular displacement relative to the stationary holding members 30 with the casing members 70.

As a result, with the angular displacement of the movable holding members 40, as shown in FIG. 13(B), the deformable portions 24 of the receptacle terminals 20 held by the movable holding members 40 deform to be bent in the sheet thickness direction. Accordingly, the receptacle terminals 20 displace such that parts from the deformable portions 24 to upper ends (ends of the contact portions 22) tilt with the deformable portions 24 being fulcrum. The deformation of the deformable portions 24 may be either elastic deformation or plastic deformation. As described above, the casing members 70 make angular displacement and thereby the receptacle-side connecting members 10 displace in a direction of the displacement in the relative positions. As a result, following the displacements, the receptacle connector 1 floats.

According to the embodiment, the receptacle terminals 20 displace to tilt. Therefore the amount of displacement of the contact portions 22 of the receptacle terminals 20 in the direction of the displacement is greater than when the contact portions of the terminals displace straight in the displacement direction without tilting as in conventional connector. In other words, according to the embodiment, it is not necessary to increase the total length of the terminals and in turn the side of the connector. In addition, it is also

26

not necessary to complicate the shapes of the terminals, to achieve large floating and thereby it is achievable to manage great positional displacement between the connectors 1 and 2.

Furthermore, according to the embodiment, the deformable portions 24 are located between the lower held portions 23 and the upper holding portions 25. In short, the deformable portions 24 are positioned between the stationary holding members 30 and the movable holding members 40. Therefore, the receptacle terminals 20 will not be flexed at the lower held portions 23, which are held by the stationary holding members 30 and at the upper holding portions 25, which are held by the movable holding members 40. As a result, it is achievable to bend to deform the deformable portions 24 by securely focusing the stress on the deformable portions 24 upon floating.

As a result of the floating of the receptacle connector 1 as described above, the guide surfaces 71C of the casing members 70 guide the fitting walls 22 of the plug-side connecting members 110 into the receiving portions 76. The contact portions 132 of the plug terminals 130 are brought to the positions to be contactable with the contact portions 22 of the receptacle terminals 20. Then, the plug-side connecting members being moved further downward, the connector fitting operation is completed. As shown in FIGS. 13(A) through 13(C), even in the state that the connector fitting operation is completed, the tilted state of the casing members 70 and the receptacle-side connecting members 10 is maintained.

According to the embodiment, the receptacle connector 1 floats in the connector fitting process, but it may not be only the connector fitting process for the receptacle connector 1 to float. For example, even when the connectors 1 and 2 are fitted to each other at regular fitting positions, while being the fitted state, the connectors 1 and 2 may receive unexpected external force in the arrangement direction. Even when the relative positions between the connectors 1 and 2 are displaced in the connector fitted state, it is achievable to satisfactorily keep the electrically connected state between the connectors 1 and 2 by floating of the receptacle connector 1 in the direction of the displacement.

According to the embodiment, the contact portions 22 of the receptacle terminals 20 are made wider than those of the contact portions 132 of the plug terminals 130. Therefore, in the connector fitting process and in the connector fitted state, even when the relative positions between the receptacle terminals 20 and the plug terminals 130 are not aligned, it is achievable to contact the contact portions 22 and 132 to each other as long as the contact portions 132 of the plug terminals 130 are within the range of the widths of the contact portions 22 of the receptacle terminals 20. According to the embodiment, the contact portions 22 of the receptacle terminals 22 are made wide. Alternatively, the contact portions 132 of the plug terminals 130 may be made wide. In addition, the contact portions 22 and 132 of the both terminals 20 and 130 can be made wide.

Moreover, according to the embodiment, the angularly displaced casing members 70 press the pressure-receiving portions 44A of the movable holding members 40 of the receptacle-side connecting members 10 and thereby the receptacle-side terminals 20 are displaced. In other words, the casing members 70 indirectly push the receptacle terminals 20 via the movable holding members 40. Instead, the casing members 70 can directly push the receptacle terminals 20 to displace.

According to the embodiment, depending on the displacement in relative positions between the connectors 1 and 2,

27

the casing members 70 make angular displacement. Alternatively, for example, the casing members 70 can displace straight in the arrangement direction, or can displace so as to include both angular displacement and straight displacement.

According to the embodiment, the receptacle terminals 20 displace in the sheet thickness direction and also contact with the plug terminals 130 at their sheet surfaces. Instead, the receptacle terminals 20 can displace in a direction horizontal to the sheet surfaces, and contact with the plug terminals 130 at their sheet thickness surfaces (die-cut surfaces).

In addition, according to the embodiment, while the contact portions 22 of the receptacle terminals 20 are convexly curved and have elasticity, the contact portions 132 of the plug terminals 130 do not have elasticity. Alternatively, the contact portions 132 of the plug terminals 130 can have elasticity as well as or instead of the contact portions 22 of the receptacle terminals 20. Moreover, according to the embodiment, the receptacle terminals 20 can deform at the deformable portions 24. Therefore, it is not essential for the contact portions 22 of the receptacle terminals 20 to have elasticity. Even if the contact portions 22 do not have elasticity, the contact portions 22 can still contact with the contact portions 132 of the plug terminals 130 with certain contact pressure.

According to the embodiment, the invention is applied in a connector assembled component, in which a connector fitting direction is set as a direction perpendicular to a mounting surface of a circuit board. Alternatively, for example, the invention may be applicable to a so-called "right angle-type" connector assembled component, in which a fitting direction is set as a direction horizontal to a mounting surface of a circuit board.

What is claimed is:

1. An electrical connector to be mounted on a circuit board, and to be connected to a mating connector, comprising:

a plurality of connecting members arranged in an arrangement direction thereof in parallel to the circuit board; and

a housing member attached to the connecting members for accommodating at least one of the connecting members,

wherein each of said connecting members includes a terminal to be connected to the mating connector, and a holding member for holding the terminal,

each of said terminals includes a connecting portion disposed at one end portion thereof in a longitudinal direction thereof for connecting to a circuit portion of

28

the circuit board, a contact portion disposed at the other end portion thereof in the longitudinal direction for contacting with a mating contact of the mating connector, and a held portion disposed at a location near the connecting portion in the longitudinal direction and held with the holding member,

said housing member is arranged to be movable linearly relative to the holding member in the arrangement direction, or to be rotatable relative to the holding member with a connector width direction as a rotational axis thereof perpendicular to the arrangement direction, said housing member includes a guiding surface for guiding the mating terminal toward the contact portion when the electrical connector is connected to the mating connector,

each of said terminals further includes a deformable portion disposed at a location opposite to the connecting portion relative to the held portion in the longitudinal direction, and

said deformable portion is arranged to deform in the arrangement direction when the guiding surface guides the mating terminal and the housing member is moved linearly or rotated.

2. The electrical connector according to claim 1, wherein each of said connecting members further includes a movable holding member for holding the terminal between the contact portion and the deformable portion in the longitudinal direction,

said movable holding member includes a pressure receiving portion for receiving a pressing force of the housing member when the housing member is moved linearly or rotated, and

said movable holding member is arranged to rotate relative to a stationary holding member with the connector width direction as a rotational axis thereof.

3. The electrical connector according to claim 2, wherein said terminal is formed of a metal band member, said terminal is arranged to be deformable in a plate thickness direction thereof,

said deformable member has a width greater than a portion held with the movable holding member, and said terminal further includes a recessed portion or a hole portion within the width.

4. The electrical connector according to claim 1, wherein said terminal is formed of a metal band member, said terminal is arranged to be deformable in a plate thickness direction thereof, and

said deformable member has a width smaller than that of the held portion and the connecting portion.

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